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THE SQUIRE'S DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.

BY MARLTON DOWNING.

The court had convened, but there was no prisoner present, neither were there any great legal luminaries on hand to expound the intricate and mystifying points of Blackstone, yet the party gathered together were deeply interested in the case which was about to be brought before them, for they were all either judges or witnesses, and most of the latter aspired to the high dignity of the former.

This unique tribunal, self-appointed, by the way, consisted of the greater portion of the matrons and elderly maidens of a little village that nestled quietly amid the Berkshire Hills of New England.

"I declare, if it isn't just awful! And to think we, respectable people, have been associating with that Martha Preston! Even sitting beside her in meeting, all this time, and she, such a shameless hussy! Why, it makes me shiver!"

And the horrified spinster raised her two hands in air, while she rolled her cat-like eyes toward the smoky ceiling of Farmer Carter's kitchen in which the indignant females had met for the purpose (not openly avowed, however) of tearing to pieces the character of one of their neighbors, the lovely daughter of Widow Preston.

"I quite agree with you, Maria Jane," returned Mehitable Jones. "Why, she is a great deal worse than Bessy Watson, who you remember, two years ago last harvest was in trouble. She had consideration enough upon us to leave the place and go to Boston where nobody knew her and consequently no one need blush when they met her on the road."

"But this creature," interrupted Farmer Carter's wife, "is brazen enough to stay here and defy us to our very faces. I, for one, am shocked."

"So am I! So am I. So am I!" chimed in her listeners in chorus.

"But whose name is mentioned in connection with Martha's?" inquired a squeaky voice in the chimney-corner.

"Ah, there, Jerushy," replied Maria Blackburn, who seemed to be the leading spirit among these gossips, "you've asked a question that might be hard to answer, for to my certain knowledge there's been more'n one name, but they do say," and here the malicious voice of the speaker dropped to a whisper, "they do say Squire Tucker's son has visited Widow Preston's house (poor soul!) most too often."

"Squire Tucker's son! Oh, if that ain't just too awful! Who would believe it?" exclaimed the croaking maid by the fireside. "And his father, what a nice man! His wife, only dead one year last grass," and a heavy sigh escaped from the bosom of the antiquated female to whom the tender passion was supposed to be a stranger.

"The squire away in foreign parts too! It will bring his gray hairs in sorrow to the grave," responded Mehitable Jones, as she essayed to brush some moisture from the glasses of the silver-rimmed spectacles which rested upon her aquiline nose.

"When do they expect the squire back?" asked Farmer Carter's wife, who though mistress of the establishment was by no means mistress of ceremonies.

"I heard Parson Brown say last Sabbath that he was coming some time this week," answered one who had heretofore remained silent.

"Then I will tell you what we ought to do! It is our duty," declared Maria Jane Blackburn, with great decision. "That is, we will call upon Squire Tucker just as soon as he gets home and tell him how things have been going here in the village since he has been gone."

"Poor man! But who is going to be the one to send the shaft that will pierce his already wounded and bleeding heart?" inquired the lackadasical Jerusha, (who also essayed to be poetic.)

"As I said," quickly rejoined Maria Jane, "it was a duty, and a painful one. If there is no other who will undertake the task I will perform it," and the elderly spinster drew herself up with an air of Spartan-like determination, and glared fiercely around upon her listeners.

A slight pause ensued, then Mehitable Jones asked:

"Now don't you think, Maria, that some of us should wait upon Martha Preston and request her for the sake of the morals of the community to leave the village?"

"Most assuredly! Most assuredly!" was the unanimous reply, for all seemed ready and anxious to humiliate the young woman in question.

"I think there is no better time than the present, so we'll all go at once to the widow's house," and as though the matter was settled, Mehitable Jones tied the green strings to her sunbonnet, repinned the red mantilla about her angular shoulders and was prepared to start forth upon her officious mission.



The cottage of Widow Preston stood upon the outskirts of the village, near the edge of a beautiful green meadow, through which a crystal brook wended its way to be lost in the river that in turn would be swallowed up by the vast waters of the ocean.

Over the door and before the windows climbed roses and honeysuckles and the entire place possessed an air of homelike comfort.

As the party of mischief-makers salled forth to carry dismay and consternation to this peaceful abode of mother and daughter, a horse and carriage drew up before the gate and the occupants of the vehicle, Squire Tucker and his son Edward, alighted.

The latter hitched the animal's head to a post and both entered the house as if they were sure of a welcome.

In the cosy little parlor Mrs. Preston, her daughter Martha, and Rev. Mr. Brown, the tender, benevolent, spiritual leader of the town were seated.

As the visitors appeared, the trio rose to their feet but when Martha saw who it was that accompanied the young man, it seemed as though she essayed to shrink back to avoid observation.

If such had been her intention it was frustrated by Edward's springing forward and clasping her in his arms while he exclaimed:

"See, Martha, father has not been in town

fifteen minutes but he has come to offer you his greeting."

"Yes, my daughter," remarked the squire in a cordial voice, grasping the trembling hand of the young woman. "I bestow upon you both my blessing. The letters of Edward which reached me when abroad were so full of praises of your beauty and character that I am prepared to love you. Although I could hardly realize that the little Martha Preston whom I remembered as a school-girl when I went away had grown up and become the wife of my son, yet I see that sometimes a year and a half will produce great changes."

Then to the other occupants of the room the squire extended a most hearty greeting.

Tom Tucker's Two Mashes.

A STORY OF IRISH DESCENT.

If there was one man in Cloverville who believed himself to be the personification of everything that was physically beautiful and mentally marvellous, who considered his person as irresistibly charming as his wit was brilliant, that man was Tom Tucker. He was one of those remarkable individuals who imagine that the world and its inhabitants were created for their sole and particular benefit, whose features convey by their expression, an insufferable degree of pride, and whose exaggerated ideas of their own importance in the community frequently get them into ridiculous scrapes.

Tom dressed well and looked well—for he was of athletic build and had a decent allowance from his father to foot his tailor's bills. This was fortunate, inasmuch as he possessed all the instincts of a dude, and sported a new suit every other week. It was not simply for the sake of appearing well among his fellows that Tom dressed so lavishly. He had an idea common with the rest of his class that the fair sex are more effectively caught by a fashionable coat than by a proof of character, so he arrayed himself daily in garments affected by those dudes, of whom an irreverent poet has said:

"Not even Solomon in his glory was arrayed as one of these; There're no creases in their overcoats nor bags upon their knees."

Tom loved the fair sex without reserve—after his fashion, that is, he delighted to flirt with every girl he met, more particularly if she was pretty.

There was a new schoolma'am come to Cloverville and Tom heard a report that she was a perfect beauty and had quite a graceful figure. So our hero made it his business to promenade the vicinity of the schoolhouse every afternoon in order to catch a glimpse of her. It was several days however before his patience was rewarded.

He saw a queenly form emerge from the schoolgate and walk rapidly in his direction. He put on his very best look and smiled benignly on the young lady as she passed him. But the girl took no notice whatever of him until she had gone nearly half a block, when she very injudiciously turned her head.



"HURRAH!" EXCLAIMED TOM, "I HAVE GOT A MASH!"

He watched her furtively for fear others might observe him. Right between them was an Irish laborer filling his hod with bricks and commencing to climb the ladder in front of a building in course of erection. Tom glanced around. Nobody else appeared to be watching and as the pretty little schoolma'am continued to look back now and again, Mr. Tucker resolved on following her. Carelessly sucking the head of his cane, he sauntered after her in a leisurely way.

What feelings of pride and vanity filled his head as he contemplated the conquest he was about to make! The girl was evidently smitten by his aristocratic appearance and magnificent figure. She would be glad to make his acquaintance, and how the rest of the fellows in town would regard him with envy. This pretty girl—



"GREAT SCOTT!" EXCLAIMED TOM, "HERE'S ANOTHER MASH!"

His train of thought had been suddenly interrupted as he passed in front of the ladder, by the rapid descent of the Irishman, hod, bricks and all! A weak round in the ladder had snapped and precipitated Paddy and his load to the sidewalk below, but Tom had kindly, but unconsciously, intervened his person and received the Hibernian's crushing weight upon the crown of his fashionable derby.

In that brief second Mr. Tucker saw more stars than he ever thought were in the heavens, but through the brilliant constellation he perceived the face of the pretty young schoolma'am laughing at him in the distance. His ideas of conquest were ended. In more senses than one he felt crushed, and as he turned to the prostrate Irishman, who was bewailing the loss of his black clay pipe in mournful tones, he had a sudden desire to kill him then and there.

But all his wrath on Paddy was wasted, for the Milesian simply answered by asking a question:

" Didn't ya know it was unlucky to walk under a ladder?"

Gentlemen:—You may want to know who H. Birney is. I am an old farmer, 60 years of age. I have not been able to work on the farm or do a day's labor for 18 years. You sent me one tablet last spring wrapped up in a circular. The circular told me what the tablet was for, so I thought I would try a box and if I was sold I would be a wiser man.

BEFORE, I could not do an hour's labor, now I can plow all day or do any common labor, and I am now placing the food among my neighbors. I have several orders for OXEN to-day and nothing to fill them with, so I enclose fifteen dollars for an assorted lot. I received the five dollar lot and it is all sold.

I will devote my time now to selling the food and making old folks young. If any one wishes to get a sample of this food and circular explaining its use write to Giant Oxie Co., Augusta, Me. Yours truly,

H. BIRNEY, Seward, Nebr.

COURAGE.

The day was cold and dreary
The rain was falling fast,
A fog hung over the hillside,
A light snow covered the grass.

Perched on a leafless maple,
A flock of little brown birds
Sang the sweetest, merriest carol,
That ever my ear had heard.

As they sang in the rainfall
A lesson came with the song;
Rainy days last not forever
Sunshine will follow the storm.

After winter comes springtime,
After darkness comes dawn;
April showers bring the May blossoms
Sunshine will follow the storm.

Meet misfortune with courage,
Lighten life's burdens with song;
Some time the clouds will be lifted,
Sunshine will follow the storm.

— RUEL A BANCKS.

The Squire's Daughter-in-law.

CONTINUED FROM 17TH PAGE.

"I could have wished," observed Squire Tucker, "that Ned had waited until my return so that I might have been present at the wedding, but as I found that I was compelled to remain away much longer than I had expected, I did as you know give my willing consent to have the marriage take place."

Scarcely had the father finished speaking when a loud and peremptory knock was heard, and Mrs. Preston hurried to open the door.

When the members of the Court of Indignation (for it was they) entered, a look of astonishment was stamped upon every face!

Maria Jane was the first to recover her self-possession. Extending her hand toward the great man of the place she said:

"Squire Tucker, I am glad to see you, and am pleased that you have considered it your duty, on the first moment of your arriving home, to call here and reprimand this—this—woman," indicating Martha with a sniff of contempt, "whom we have cause to know has striven to lead your son astray."

"And Mrs. Preston," interrupted Mehitable Jones, "we have called here to request you to do some retreat for your daughter, as we do not wish to be contaminated by her presence in the village!"

The first effect of the words of the two spinsters was profound surprise which quickly gave place to righteous indignation.

"Oh, you vipers!" exclaimed the young husband. "You evil and corrupt vixens! Would that you were men, every one of you, that I might tear those lying and slanderous tongues from your throats and fling them into your miserable faces! Out of my sight! Or I shall forget that you are attired in the garb of women and thrash you as you deserve!"

"Peace, my son, peace," interposed the squire. "Our neighbors apparently do not understand the condition of affairs. My friends, this young lady," taking his daughter-in-law by the hand, "has not been Martha Preston for nearly a year, but Mrs. Edward Tucker, the beloved wife of my dear son!"

"Land sakes alive!" exclaimed Jerusha Stebbins in surprise. "And we've been living right here in the village and never knew a thing about it. Why, Marthy, why didn't you tell us? You know we neighbors always took a kindly interest in you ever since you was a child."

"Yes, altogether too kindly!" interrupted the husband wrathfully. "In the future, you'll oblige us greatly if you'll mind your own business."

"Dear sisters," said the minister, speaking for the first time. "It grieves me greatly that you felt called upon to pass judgment on the actions of a fellow-creature, least of all one of your own sex who, even had she been misguided, should have found a refuge and kindly sympathy in you rather than words of censure and contumely! Remember the words of the Scripture to 'Judge not, lest ye be judged,' and 'Cast out the beam from thine own eye,' then you may see the mote in your brother's eye."

At this rebuke the chagrined and crest-fallen mischief-makers stammered forth a few words of apology and then one by one they left the cottage and returned to their homes, having received a lesson which it is safe to say they will never forget.

The squire's mansion now seemed to possess an additional ray of sunshine, for the loving wife of Edward and the noble, Christian Mrs. Preston combined to make the great house cheerful and rendered the lives of its generous owner and his manly son happy for many years.

Advice to Young Girls.

If sickness plunges you in grief,
If doctors give you no relief,
Just take a friend's advice—'tis brief—
Try Oxien!

If weakness causes you to faint,
Or suffering from a girl's complaint,
To place both under quick restraint—
Try Oxien!

If you're hardworked and daily feel
A languor o'er you often steal,
A weariness you can't conceal—
Try Oxien!

Should dizziness your head attack,
Or pains that make it fit to crack,
If rest and sleep you nightly lack—
Try Oxien!

If roses from your cheeks have fled,
And left them ghastly pale instead,
If loss of beauty you should dread—
Try Oxien!

If in your mirror you behold
You're growing prematurely old,
The remedy is quickly told—
Try Oxien!

If women's ailments you endure,
Your poest-friend can now assure
You of a most unfailing cure—
Try Oxien!

No animal that walks on four legs is as big a fool as a sheep, according to a sheep-raiser, who says:

"We have to watch them every minute, and if vigilance is relaxed for an instant the entire flock is likely to practically commit suicide. If caught in a storm on the plains they will drift before the wind and die of cold and exposure rather than move one hundred yards to windward to obtain shelter in their corral. To drive sheep against the wind is absolutely impossible. I once lost over one thousand head because I could not drive them to corral not two hundred feet away. In the corral they are still more foolish. If a storm comes up they all move 'down wind,' until stopped by the fence. Then begins the proceeding so much dreaded by sheepmen, known as 'piling.' The sheep will climb over each other's backs until they are heaped up ten feet high. Of course, all those at the bottom are smothered. Not one has sense enough to seek shelter under the lee of the fence, as a horse or a dog would do. Again, if a sheep gets into a quicksand, its fate teaches nothing to those that come immediately after, but the whole flock will follow its leader to destruction. No more exasperatingly stupid brute than a sheep."

Harriet Beecher Stowe said:

"When you get into a tight place, and everything goes against you till it seems as if you could not hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that's just the place and time that the tide'll turn."

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Call me thine own.	Matrimonial sweets.	Magigot's hymn.	James.	The jester.
Cheer, boys, cheer.	My grandmother.	Ma'sy ron.		



MY DEAR FRIENDS:

A new year has dawned upon us, with all its hopes and possibilities. Another year of suffering, perhaps some of you will say in a moment of discouragement. Yes, and another year in which to do God's will, and have His blessed purposes fulfilled in our lives. And who knows but what in these coming days, before the Christmas tide shall come again, the gates may swing wide open, and the longed-for release comes to some suffering, pinioned soul? This year, too, may bring the time when your discipline shall be complete, and God will restore you to health and strength again. Whatever comes, Our Father knows best, and we will rest on that, believing in His love. "God hath bound thy trouble upon thee, with a desire to try thee, and with purposes to reward and crown thee. These cords thou canst not break; and therefore lie them down gently, and suffer the hand of God to do what He pleases."

"Consider this, my first letter, as a timid plea for admittance to what I am sure must be a very happy family. I may more clearly define my position when I say that I am a 'Shut In'; one who has not been one hundred yards from the table at which he writes this letter for nearly one year. When this is said you will concede the fact that I am indeed a 'Shut In.' I must commend the delicate and feeling way that Southern Girl deals with the sentiments of those heroes who wore both the blue and the gray. 'Tis a subject that older (I will not say wiser) heads have handled with less conservatism. May I also add a word concerning Moon of Leaves? I am greatly pleased with the tone and general wording of her letter. Methinks she must be quite a brilliant conversationalist and if not deemed presumptuous would ask that she exchange a letter with me through the medium of our dear Aunt Minerva, and give me the origin of her *nom de plume*. I will be adjudged a self-appointed critique if I don't desist and show other reasons for this writing. I am pleased to enclose subscription to your sparkling little journal and hope for, and am sure, that many a dreary and lonely hour will be cheered by perusing the bright messages from my several cousins. Your dutiful nephew,

SOUTHRON, No. 2."

"I want to help all that need, for I can fully sympathize with them, as I have been an invalid for nearly 14 years, up to two years ago, a 'Shut In,' but am thankful to say my general health the past two years has been better, that I can sometimes get to church and Sabbath-school. I live in the country a mile from the church, and 5 miles from P. O. I see much for and against novels. I am an old woman, 60 years old, I must own, I enjoy reading some novels. I read out to my children, or have done so, ever since I have been an invalid, and try to have such as will benefit and not injure. Some do not approve of fairy tales. I rather read 'Grimm's Fairy Tales,' than have my children read Shakespeare, 'Arabian Nights,' and such.

MIDDLE GEORGIA."

If children never read anything worse than 'Grimm's Fairy Tales,' they will not be likely to become very much depraved. I could never see any harm in fairy tales, and agree with you in thinking them safe and pleasant reading for children.

Dear Auntie and Cousins:—We get COMFORT regularly now, and I, for one, am glad you've given us a separate column, so we may not disturb a few who dislike an invalid's monotonous ways. I say a few because a great many, I think nearly all, enjoy an occasional chat with us, for quite well do I recall the peaceful hours derived through God's spirit, from my visits and chats with the paupers, and more particularly, when I think of one poor boy on his dying couch, whom, in my humble efforts, I had tried to instruct before he became ill. Although the kindness has been "Only a cup of cold water in His name," how good we feel for having given it. Ah, yes, "Their works do follow them always"—sin, or righteousness, and gives us peace, or uneasiness of mind. Dozens of letters of true sympathy have been written me from the cousins, and it has cheered me very much indeed; write again, cousins, let me hear from all. Auntie, the intent of this letter is to thank every one for their letters, papers, etc.

I am some stronger now, and we are being blessed in many ways. Please allow me a brief chat with some of my invalid sisters, who say, 'reading the Bible and religious literature keeps them sad, always thinking of death,' etc. Dear cousins, this good, 'holy Bible, book divine,' is more comfort than you know of, if accompanied by God's Spirit. I can sympathize with you, I didn't use to love it, and its readings always, as you say, suggested the thoughts of death; but I am thankful now for such blessed reminders, yet so gentle and comforting in their golden pages, pointing out the way of salvation, and escape from everlasting, yes, never-ending torment which we are sure to come to, if kept out of mind as well as God, in this world. If you cannot read much, like myself, send for a neighbor's little chatterbox, she may play about on the bed and cheer you very much.

ANNIE E. MOORE, Washington, Ark."

I am glad to hear, from so many dear friends, that our "Sunshine Corner" is enjoyed and appreciated. Let us make it so bright and attractive by our pleasant talks together, that all the cousins will be glad to come from their own corner and gather around ours, where there is always sunshine. Those who are now well and strong do not know how soon sickness and suffering may come upon them, and while they have health and strength, should do all they can for those who are not so blessed.

Dear Auntie:—May I come again to thank you and the cousins for your kindness. Now my dear COMFORT cousin, you who want to deprive the poor "Shut Ins" and invalid cousins from coming to our dear Auntie and asking for a little comfort through the columns of our paper, don't you think you are a little too hard? I do. Does not the great book of books tell us, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," and is that doing as you would like to be done by? You would not like for one of your friends, when you began to tell them something, rise up and leave you. Oh no, that would hurt your feelings. Don't you suppose these poor sick people who are deprived of the sweets of life have some feeling too? You do not know what pleasure the sympathy and kindness of others give to those poor afflicted ones, or you would not want them to stand back and look on. I would be pleased to hear from any of the cousins who wish to lend a helping hand to the needy. May you all enjoy health and happiness is the sincere wish of your cousin,

DOLLIE.

"Will some one who has books to spare (good stories, poems or any good reading) and would like to send comfort to a poor invalid on a lonely farm in Dak., please direct to me and I will see that she gets them safely. Mrs. LIDA JAYNES, Wesley, S. Dak."

Dear Aunt Minerva:—May I write a few lines to the dear suffering "Shut Ins" and cousins? Although not one of your family as a member, yet the bond of sympathy unites me to you. Having been an invalid for 4 years I know and can understand their feelings. Lone Star's letter and M. V. I. Merrifel's remarks have made me feel as if I should like to say a few words. Please, dear ones, do not let any of the lonely ones know you do not wish for their tales of woe and trials and tribulations. You may be depriving some of their one comfort by so doing. Have you ever known in what a joy it is to a lonely suffering heart to confide in one whom she knows has sympathy for her? Have we not suffered that we might be able to understand how to sympathize with other suffering

ones, and how can we do so when we do not know their feelings, and how can we know their feelings if they do not tell them to us. Would Jesus turn away and say, "I have suffered myself, tell me something more pleasant and diverting than this." No! He says, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest." He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, that He might be able to enter into the feelings of each one as they come to Him for comfort and rest. How true it is there are very few in good health who have much sympathy or know how to sympathize, and to a suffering one the thought that "no one cares" makes the burden harder to bear than the actual pain. Ask yourselves these questions, and do as Jesus would do. "Bear ye one another's burdens," and so fulfill the law of Christ, I pray God's richest blessings on you and your work and may you and the large family 'as the beloved of the Lord dwell in safety by him.'

Yours in loving sympathy,

MISS REBECCA E. SMITH,
424 Lincoln Ave., Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, O.

"If you please, I will take my seat right here in this corner set apart for 'Shut Ins' only; and how nice to be all by ourselves. Although I am not entirely shut in now, I do not have the privilege of doing as I once did. I was confined to my bed 3 years with spinal disease and if I had not practiced just what Maria Jones preaches, I would not be writing to you. But the dear Saviour had yet a work for me to do, and spared my life. My favorite physicians were Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet and Dr. Merriman. I feel so grateful to be able to walk again, that I say with every step, 'Oh praise the Lord, praise Him all ye people.' In sickness and trouble we should always maintain a cheerfulness just as far as we can.

A. L. PORTER, So. Monterey, Mich."

"All round the year the trusting soul
May find the word of promise whole;
The flight of time, unknown above,
Breaks not our Father's boundless love.
Unbroken be the tranquil light
That folds our lesser sphere,
As ever pure, and calm, and bright
All round the year."

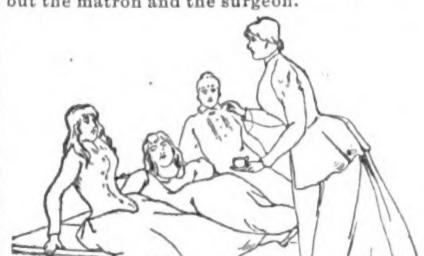
Names of those needing help and sympathy:
Fannie Nelson, New Salem, Rink Co., Texas.
Miss Emily M. Wheaton, North Branford, Conn.
A. A. Norton, Odin, Ills.
Mrs. Evelyn Fay, 405 No. 5th St., East Saginaw, Mich.

Mattie L. Martin, Frederick, Ga.
Madison L. Nash, Tyro, Miss.With kind wishes and loving thoughts.
AUNT MINERVA, (Care of COMFORT.)

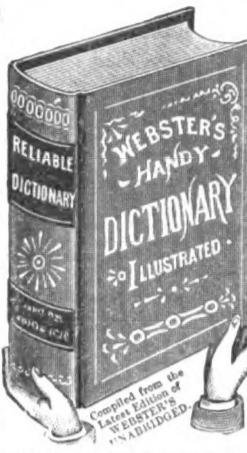
NEW YORK BY GASLIGHT.

THE CRIMES OF A GREAT CITY.—WHAT THE MATRON DOES AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS FOR THE FEMALE PRISONERS.

Until recently all the female prisoners in New York have been received and attended to by men. But a recent enactment has provided an improvement by adding a female inspector to the regular force. When it is considered that many of the female prisoners reach the station house under the influence of liquor and that every prisoner must be searched before going to a cell, the propriety of such an office is at once apparent and the wonder is that it was not instituted long ago. The arrests among women are not all confined to outcasts but include many who, while not within the pale of reputable society, are still somewhat above that class, to say nothing of the numerous instances where the prisoners are merely suspects and who cannot be properly included among the criminal class till their guilt is proven. There are occasional instances also of visiting females indulging somewhat too freely in the cup that cheers, and landing quite unexpectedly in a station house. These cases are not so rare as one might suppose nor are their victims particularly criminal. There is also a department for lodging homeless women, and of course they are necessarily under some inspection. The "lodging" cannot be called either comfortable or luxurious, the extent of the provision merely affording a bare plank on which to sleep. Some of these unfortunate come to the lodging room with a good dram inside taken to keep out the cold. In the heat of the room this soon has an effect and it is not an unfrequent occurrence to have a full fledged riot in progress before the night is over. It is horrible to consider how dreadfully exposed some of these women are and to what stress the matron is put to sew their clothing so that they will be respectable when they reach court. When they are injured or sick they are taken to a private room and no one goes near them but the matron and the surgeon.



It is hard to understand why the police oppose the appointment of matrons, but they do. It is possibly because they have become so disgusted with their experiences that they have no time for useless sentiment; but the matron is a useful institution and she has probably come to stay.



Having a Big run, everybody needs it. A wonderful offer. This is a standard work of real value, not to be compared with the anonymous and trashy dictionaries largely advertised. It contains 320 pages, and upward of 30,000 words, with pronunciation and definition of each, and numerous illustrations. It is handsomely bound in cloth, and is a very neat and attractive book. To those who cannot afford \$12.00 Webster, we further offer an admirable substitute in fact, unless you already have a modern, unabridged dictionary in the house, you should certainly have this. We will send this Dictionary by mail, postpaid, for 25c., or given free as a premium for a 6 months Subscription to COMFORT at 33 cents; or we will give the Dictionary free to any one sending us a club of 4 subscribers at 25 cents each.

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The Millionaires of New York.

JAY GOULD.

HOW THE GREAT AMERICAN FINANCIER LIVES.—HIS DAILY WORK, AND HOW HE HAS AMASSED HIS FORTUNE.

Jay Gould, the great king of Wall Street, whose fame has filled both the old world and the new, is not a remarkable person so far as his personal appearance is concerned. There is none of the striking individuality in his face that was so prominent a feature of the late Henry Ward Beecher, and but for the intense interest that surrounds his every movement, he would attract but little attention in the hurrying throngs that surge to and fro in the vicinity of Wall and Broad Streets, where stands amid a perfect network of telegraph wires the building of the New York Stock Exchange.

He is considerably undersized, probably not more than 5 feet, 5 inches, and is a light delicately built man. He is in the neighborhood of five and fifty, and his once dark hair is strongly marked with gray. A heavy beard covering the lower part of his face gives him a look of muscular strength that is greatly deceiving, for his weight is not much over 120 lbs. The top of his head however, shows where his real strength lies; the forehead being wide and deep, the top of the skull showing an area that accounts for the wonderful brain underneath. A straight nose

if he doesn't, that more fortunes are lost in a day in Wall Street than are made in a year. And in the nature of things it must be so. In no other business would men engage without previous knowledge except in speculating. And when they fail they cry fraud, and call men like Gould thieves, robbers and pillagers. As a matter of fact, Mr. Gould has but little to do with the control of the market, and has all he can do to manage his own vast interests.

Statements purporting to come from Mr. Gould regarding the state of the market can invariably be put down as false. He rarely divulges his plans, and is notoriously a silent man. In fact so marked is this habit, that few men are seen in conversation with Mr. Gould on his daily ride to and from his home in Irvington, and bitter experience has taught him that his lightest remark is liable to be misconstrued, and he is exceedingly careful in his conversation even with his intimates.

Mr. Gould's home—the one that is really his home—overlooks the beautiful Hudson and is situated in the charming village of Irvington, the home of Washington Irving, and the scene of Major Andre's capture during the Revolution. All around the vicinity are historical associations and romantic memories. His home is almost feudal in its aspect, standing as it does on a high bank commanding a view of the Hudson, its famous palisades and its picturesque highlands.

Around the Gould's house are spacious grounds given to the cultivation of rare and beautiful flowers. Mr. Gould's green houses are famous even in this region of magnificent horticultural possessions. This is Mr. Gould's hobby, and during the lifetime of Mrs. Gould, much of his time was spent with her in the development of their floral treasures. The green houses are open at all times to visitors, and are rarely without appreciative spectators. The house itself is built of white granite and resembles an old



time baronial castle. It was built at an enormous cost by a banker who went down in the mad whirl of Wall Street, and came into the hands of Mr. Gould at merely a nominal figure. It is quiet but expensively furnished, and has an air of quiet comfort throughout. Mr. Cyrus W. Field is a neighbor of Mr. Gould's, as is Mr. John D. Rockefeller of Standard Oil fame. Although Mr. Gould's means are ample he has never, like the Vanderbilts, had any social aspirations. His home life is one of the most



THE SHOOTING OF JIM FISKE BY EDWARD S. STOKES.

somewhat larger than usual, and a pair of piercing black eyes complete the picture of a man who in the short time he has spent in life has probably attracted more attention, and has caused more discussion than almost any other man in this country, with possibly the exception of General Grant. Like Grant he has the same stolid demeanor in the face of trying situations. Nothing seems to ruffle the calm impenetrable manner that marks the great financier. I remember on one occasion he called for the footing of a certain account in the book-keeper gave the figures only to discover a few moments later that his calculations were \$100,000 out of the way, and Mr. Gould had left the office! By good luck the clerk over took him in the office of his favorite broker with a slouch hat drawn over his eyes and his feet perched on a railing. "I made a mistake, Mr. Gould," panted the clerk, "the amount should have been \$100,000."

simple and unpretentious imaginable; during his wife's lifetime he found his sole recreation in her society. No scandal has ever touched Mr. Gould's domestic life, though his association with the notorious Jim Fiske exposed him to many temptations, but through it all he emerged with a spotless reputation. In the death of his wife two years ago he suffered an irreparable loss, and has never been the same man since. Many stories are told of his wife's unselfish devotion to him, and during all the exciting scenes through which he has passed she was always by his side to soothe his tired nerves and give him renewed strength and courage. Mobs have been before the Gould mansion in New York, and crowds of infuriated men have besieged his office in Wall St. The only sign of nervousness he ever gave was a violent headache, which his wife was wont to drive away with gentle ministrations.

Mr. Gould's family at present consists of his daughter Nellie, who is now a young lady, his son Edward and his married son George, with the latter's two sons. It is related of Miss Nellie Gould while on a visit to the Treasury at Washington that the custodian unaware of his visitor's identity handed her a package containing a million dollars, and seemed to enjoy her apparent pleasure. "When you go home," said he, "you can brag to your friends that you had as much as a million dollars in your hand at one time." As her father is worth a hundred times that amount the experience was not so novel as the worthy custodian imagined.

In the winter Mr. Gould removes to New York, but the first sign of spring sees him back to his country home. Almost any afternoon he may be encountered on the local train that runs to Tarrytown. On the whole Mr. Gould cannot be considered a happy man. "He that multiplieth riches multiplieth cares," says the Good Book, and Mr. Gould is no exception. He cannot find pleasure in society so much as he stared at, and his every word, no matter how commonplace, is eagerly seized and commented upon. If by any hook or crook it can be construed as to having any commercial significance, the opportunity is immediately seized upon, much to the regret of people acting thus hastily, as it frequently happens. As no man likes to be the innocent cause of suffering Mr. Gould is forced obliged to seek his own counsel, and the pleasure that is derived from contact with one's fellowmen is in a great measure denied to the richest man in the world.

The next "Man of Millions" to be sketched in COMFORT's series, will be that gentleman renowned for his benevolence and charity, John D. Rockefeller, of Standard Oil Co. fame, and followed each month by others of no less consequence in the business world.

HENDRIK HUDSON.

PARAGON, Indiana, Oct. 12, 1891.

I can recommend to the suffering that Oxien is all that it claims to be. I have used it for nine months for throat and lung trouble. I was a sufferer for five years. Now I can say I am almost a well man.

ANDREW L. HALE.

"less." Mr. Gould merely nodded his head, but otherwise gave no sign that the blunder might have cost him what to us would be a great fortune.

Probably few men have suffered so much from the misrepresentations of misguided speculators as Jay Gould. There is no possible excuse for the misfortunes that befall the unwary in Wall Street. No where in the world are the pitfalls so numerous or the traps so dangerous. Every man ought to know,



A WHOLE TABLE-LOAD OF FUN.

CARL has gotten together this great collection of games, &c., assorting up the best from an immense bankrupt stock that we just purchased for 10c. on the dollar, and to introduce our great line of Novelties, Books, Magic, and other apparatus. We are going to give away a certain number of these collections with our catalogue of Fancy Goods, &c. We are the *largest sellers* in this line of goods in the market, but we cannot *half illustrate* our grand cabinet of rare goods, and can only name a few of the articles included with each lot. One game of Authors, 48 cards, set Dominoes, Checkers and Checker Boards and men for same, Fox and Geese and other nice board games. Set alphabetic books of Tableaux, Pantomime Flower plays, Clairvoyant, &c., Fortune, Shadow, and 25 other helpers; 50 choice sets Magic by the dozen; 11 other Parlor Games; Music, Whistler order, Letter Games, &c., all of which we send prepaid if you will show the goods and try and get orders for some in your locality. Enclose 15c. for packing, &c. You can probably dispose of what you don't care to use in the lot for a good large sum of money. We will send lots for 25c. or 50c. if you want to dispose of a quantity around home. Address

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New Bull's-Eye
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Used by Night Watchmen, Hunters and Farmers, as it throws a powerful light far into the darkness. Can be carried in the hand or adjusted to belt for skating or hunting. The top revolves so that three colors can be shown: white, red, and green. Just the thing for Farmers. Sent by mail, post-paid, 85 cents. Send for Free Catalogue of Novelties and Fancy Goods at low prices.

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No. 6. *Needles and Hooks, and What is Made With Them.* Part II. By MARIA E. WATSON. Illustrated.

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MORSE & CO., Augusta, Maine.



WATCH WHEN THE DOG COMES OUT.

This Weather Warning will faithfully forecast the weather for the ensuing 24 hours, so that you can get your own weather report without waiting for the newspaper to tell you what the weather report is to be. It is a cyclone warning. When the weather is going to be wet, a fine noble dog arises from his kennel back in the distance, and approaches the opening (see illustration), giving a signal that there is a storm approaching, as the storm comes, if it will be overcast, the dog will be seen to stand 24 hours, a butterfly is all the splendor appears to tell you that sunshine is at hand, to gladden the hearts of mankind. The butterfly and the dog are made of metal in handsome colors. The front is handsomely decorated with fancy designs and figures. In the centre stands an accurate thermometer; the whole thing being so simple that a child will understand it at once. When the devastating hurricane, cyclone and wind storms are approaching your home, this machine warns you long ahead, giving you time to prepare. It is a wonderful machine, and will save your life and many a dollar besides. It tells you whether it will be better to take your umbrella with you to-day. It tells a lady whether she and her will know the most suitable dress to wear, etc. Enclose 60 cents to MORSE & CO., Box 905 Augusta, Me.

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FOUR COMPLETE ALPHABETS AND 185 LARGE AND ARTISTIC PATTERNS FOR ONLY 50 CENTS.

Stamping patterns have hitherto been made only of the best linen parchment paper, which is very expensive, but after years of study, a new paper has been discovered which can be successfully used for this purpose for all kinds of POWDER stamping, making beautiful, perfect patterns which may be used for powder stamping at least **seventy-five times** with perfect success. The discovery and use of this new paper permits us to offer fine first-class stamping patterns at **one-fourth** the regular price, and in this outfit will be found for the small sum of **50 cents**, patterns which cannot be equalled by any two \$1.00 stamping outfits in the market. Each outfit contains **four complete alphabets** suitable for every description of work, two alphabets two inches high, two alphabets one inch high, and **185** beautiful and well-made patterns, many of large size, nearly all of which are named below.

- 1 Set of 26 Initials 1 inches high.
- 1 Complete Alphabet.
- 1 Design Love Lies Bleeding 6x7 in.
- 1 Outline Design Boy with Wagon 7 in.
- 1 Spray Wheat 3 in. high. [high]
- 1 Corner Design Fuchsias and Lily-of-the-Valley 5x5 inches.
- 1 Bird. [the Valley] 5x5 inches.
- 1 Crescent of Wild Roses and Buds.
- 1 Design Lady's Bust 5 inches high.
- 1 Design Sunflower 6 inches high.
- 1 Half Wreath Daisies 8 inches high.
- 1 Outline Design Girl 7 inches high.
- 1 Design Forget-me-nots 7 inches high.
- 1 Cluster Grapes 3 inches for napkins.
- 1 Corner Design Daisies 6x6 inches.
- 1 Corner Design Forget-me-nots 7x7 in.
- 1 Design for silk embroidery 3 in. wide.
- 1 Design Acorns and Leaves 9 in. high.
- 3 Braiding Patterns 2 1/2 inches wide.
- 1 Design for flannel skirt 4 inches wide.
- 3 Designs Rose Buds for baby's blanket.
- 1 Outline Design Man "ye olden time."
- 1 Outline Design "Scoot, Brother, Butterly." [Scoot.] Comic.
- 1 Design "Good Luck" Horse Shoe and Design Crescents. [Flowers.]
- 1 Spray Wild Roses 8 inches high.
- 1 Des. for tinsel embroidery 5 in. wide.
- 1 Design for shaving case 5 inches high.
- 1 Braiding Pattern with cor. 2 in. wide.
- 1 Cluster Thistles 7x7 inches.
- 1 Des. for flannel embroidery 2 1/2 inches wide.
- 1 Scallop Design with Eyelets.
- 1 Outline Design of Girl for tidy.
- 1 Spray of Jonquil 6x7 inches.
- 1 Cluster Roses and Grasses 4 inches high.
- 1 Mouse.
- 1 Design Pansies 6 inches high.
- 1 Design Lotion Lilies 5x6 inches.
- 1 Cluster Fuchsias 4x10 inches.
- 1 Corner Design Fuchsias and Lilies of the Valley 7x7 inches.
- 1 Half Wreath Wild Roses and Buds 6x6 inches.
- 1 Butterfly. [6x6 inches]
- 1 Design Good Luck 4 Leaf Clover and Large Rose Bud. [Horsehoe.]
- 1 Des. Peaches, Leaves and Blossoms.
- 1 Des. Wild Roses and Buds 4 in. high.
- 1 Design Cherry Blossoms 7 in. high.
- 1 Handsome Bouquet 6 inches high.
- 1 Outline Des. Girl and Dog 7 in. high.
- 3 Designs Wild Roses 4 inches high.
- 1 Palette with Wild Rose for Thermometer Case 6x9 inches.
- 1 Bouquet Flowers, Grasses and Ferns 3 inches high.
- 1 Rose 3 inches high. 17 inches high.
- 1 Cluster Daisies 6 inches high.
- 1 Design Pomegranate 4 1/2 inches high.
- 1 Cluster Bachelor's Buttons 7 in. high.
- 1 Design Heathen Chinee. Comic.
- 1 Braiding Design with Scallops 3 1/2 inches wide.
- 1 Design Shamrocks. [Inches wide.]
- 1 Scroll Design 1 1/2 inches wide.
- 1 Design Stag's Head 5x5 inches.
- 1 Design for Cigar Case 4x4 inches.
- 1 Design for Laundry Bag 7x9 inches.
- 1 Duck Swimming 3x4 inches.
- 1 Alphabet 1 1/2 inch high.
- 1 Alphabet 1 inch high.
- 1 Large Butterfly.
- 2 Braiding Patterns.
- 1 Spray Carnation Pink.
- 1 Buttercup 3 inches high.
- 1 Sunflower 6 inches high.
- 1 Design Buttercup.
- 1 Braiding Pattern 5 in. wd.
- 1 Design Four Leaf Clover.
- 1 Spray Daisies 6 in. high.
- 1 Yacht 7 inches high.
- 1 Dancing Girl 8 in. high.
- 1 Cluster Rose Buds.
- 1 Spray Roses 6 inches high.
- 1 Poppy Design.
- 1 Bunch Forget-me-nots.
- 2 Sprays Daisies 4 in. high.
- 1 Design of Buttercup.
- 1 Design Salvia 9 in. high.
- 1 Vine Holly 4 inches wide.
- 1 Design Daisies 4 in. high.
- 1 Spray Poppies 3 in. high.
- 1 Large Rose Bud.
- 1 Mushroom 4 inches high.
- 1 Design of Dog.
- 1 Cluster of Roses.
- 2 Daisy Designs.
- 1 Clover Design 10 in. high.
- 2 Designs for Pen Wipers.
- 1 Braiding Design 1 1/2 inch.
- 1 Design Wild Roses.
- 2 Butterflies.
- 2 Butterflies.
- 1 Anchor and Chain.
- 1 Scallop with Eyelets.
- 2 Large Butterflies.
- 1 Design Nasturtium 9 inches high.
- 1 Outline Des. Boy Spinning Top 6 in. hi.
- 1 Cluster of Buttercups 6 inches high.
- 1 Outline Design Girl Going to School 7 in. high.
- 1 Design Daisies. [10 inches high.]
- 1 Design Swallow on Bough 3x5 in.
- 1 Design of Pitcher for tray cloth.
- 1 Outline Design Boy with Bouquet 8 in. high.
- 1 Clover Design. [Inches high.]
- 1 Outline Design for tidy 6x7 inches.
- 1 Spray Golden Rod 5 inches high.
- 1 Outline Design of Girl 8 inches high.
- 1 Outline Design Girl 5 inches high.
- 1 Corner Design Daisies and Bachelor's Buttons.
- 1 Bunch Grapes. [Buttons] 8x8 inches.
- 1 Spray Forget-me-nots 7 inches high.
- 1 Design Rose Buds and Leaves.
- 1 Design Forget-me-nots and Lilies of the Valley 4x5 inches.
- 1 Design Roses with Buds and Leaves 5 inches high.
- 1 Spray Wheat. [5 inches high.]
- 1 Cluster Apple Blossoms 4x5 inches.
- 1 Spray Daisies 4 1/2 inches high.
- 1 Design Leaf.
- 2 Discs 4 inches across.
- 1 Design May Flowers 3x1 in.
- 1 Design Horse.
- 1 Dromedary's Head.
- 1 Cluster Leaves 4x5 inches.
- 1 Clover Design 4 inches high.
- 1 Tiger's Head, etc., etc., etc.
- 3 Designs of Roses and Buds.
- 1 Design of Lily 5 inches high.
- 1 Scallop Design with Corner.
- 2 Designs Forget-me-nots.
- 1 Wheat Design.
- 1 Carrier Pigeon 4x4 inches.
- 1 Star.
- 1 Spray Jonquil 5 inches high.
- 1 Spray Violet.
- 1 Design for Glove Case.
- 1 Design Tulips 3 inches high.
- 1 Rabbit's Head.
- 1 Design Snowball.
- 1 Design for Silk Embroidery.
- 1 Design Violet. [2 in. wide.]
- 1 Cluster Strawberries.
- 1 Spray Sunray 4 inches high.
- 1 Peacock's Feather.
- 1 Bunch Cherries.
- 1 Chilla Lily 4 inches high.
- 1 Design Pansy 3 inches high.
- 1 Design Leaf.
- 2 Discs 4 inches across.
- 1 Design May Flowers 3x1 in.
- 1 Design Horse.
- 1 Dromedary's Head.
- 1 Cluster Leaves 4x5 inches.
- 1 Clover Design 4 inches high.
- 1 Tiger's Head, etc., etc., etc.

No such combination of patterns have ever been sold at a less price than \$2.00 per set, and here we offer everything named above, all sent postpaid for only **50 cents**, for powder stamping, which is done almost exclusively at the present time, and we guarantee them to give perfect satisfaction, and any lady who does not feel she has obtained more than double her money, may return them and her money will be promptly refunded. With every outfit of patterns we send full and complete directions for making the powder and doing the stamping successfully, and such other information as will enable any one to do fine work from the very start. Stamping patterns were never so popular

WE PRESENT OUR READERS WITH OUR MIDWINTER NUMBER CONTAINING 20 PAGES, INCLUDING SUPPLEMENT.

COMFORT

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BIRDS CHOOSE THEIR MATES

WASHINGTON CROSSING THE DELAWARE

VALENTINE NUMBER



Volume 4 No. 4

Devoted to Art, Literature, Science and the Home Circle.

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FEBRUARY 1892.

By Morse & Co Augusta, Me.

Katherine Benham's Lover or the Romance of a Lost Valentine. By William McKendree Bangs



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In the spring the young man's fancy
Lightly turns to thoughts of love.
—Tennyson.

WHEN Howard Ross met Katharine Benham one summer he proceeded to fall violently in love with her. And she was well worthy his love, or, for the matter of that, of any man's. She was tall and although slight in build, she was strong and full of a love for fun and of all the pleasures the summer time and the country afforded. It was a great pleasure to him to play tennis

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COMFORT.

But St. Valentine's Day—that day sacred to those who love—that day in which so many lovers have told of their worship, came near. He would take advantage of its coming, he told himself. So, although he was not a poet, he sat himself down and wrote a little verse in which he spoke proudly of his love and his hopes, and only hinted at his fears. It was a simple thing; but his heart was in it. Then he took the piece of cardboard upon which he had copied it and had it prettily decorated that it might be a worthy messenger.

Howard Ross was not much afraid that his affection was not returned and it was with happy confidence that he went on the evening of the day after St. Valentine's Day to call upon Katharine Benham. She was in; but she received him coldly. He could not mistake the meaning of her manner, he thought, and he was hurt and crushed. He found it difficult to say anything of greater importance than that the weather was fine or that he thought that it might soon rain. She talked but little, too. After silence which had continued until it was almost embarrassing she said suddenly: "Yesterday was St. Valentine's Day."

"Yes," he assented.

"And I received such a lot of valentines," she went on. "Shall I show them to you? They may amuse you."

She had received a great many and as she brought them to him he took them and looked them over hastily. Some were handsome ones, sent in decorated boxes, while some were simpler. These all spoke of the admiration their senders had for her. Some few were funny or meant to be humorous. It was evident that Katharine was a favorite of St. Valentine. His own was not among the number.

"These are not all," he said as he reached the last one.

"Those are all I care to notice or ever to see again," she returned with angry vehemence.

He thought he understood. He rose abruptly and with a muttered "Goodbye," he left the room and the house.

His pride was outraged. He could not quarrel with her that she had declined his proffered love; that was her privilege. If she did not love him it was right that she should tell him so, or that she should show him that she did not. But he did not know why she should have shown him in such an angry way that she was offended; he did not know why she should have been offended at all.

Howard Ross would have been wiser had he sought from Katharine a frank explanation, but he was very angry. It may be that it would have been more creditable to him had he been less willing to take a dismissal and to think himself defeated; but Katharine's manner told him enough, he thought. A man who would persevere after such a rebuff he would think lacking in self-respect. He would give no woman any unwished-for love. It was ended.

He wearily picked up a book which he had read with great delight only a few months ago and read with a sigh the following lines:

My heart is chilled and my pulse is slow,
But often and often will memory go
Like a blind child lost in a waste of snow.
Back to the days when I loved you so,
The beautiful long ago!

My heart is heavy, my heart is old,
And that proves dross which I counted gold.
I watch no longer your curtains fold,
The window is dark and the night is cold,
And the story forever told!

CHAPTER II

A STRANGE DISCOVERY.

The dearest hope of Howard Ross was killed; but he was resolute and strong and he would not yield to despair. It would be his fate, he felt, to go on loving Katharine Benham forever. He could not help that, nor did he wish to. Life promised to be very empty for him; but he was determined to make the best he could of it.

He threw himself, heart and soul, into the business into which he had entered on his return from the country, the autumn before. He worked hard, his one immediate hope being to find himself at bed time so fatigued that he would at once fall into deep and dreamless sleep.

So he went on through all the spring. He prospered, as one must who worked as he worked and when summer came he would have been well able to take another long vacation; but he could not bear to even think of being in the country. That would have been torture.

The long hot summer days found him always at his desk, and the succeeding fall and the winter came and there was no change.

He had forgotten nothing.

Katharine Benham was as dear to him as ever. Whatever other success had come to him, he had not succeeded in making himself long less for her and her companionship.

He was strong, and his hard work and close application had had no bad effect upon his health. Sometimes he wished it would. Sometimes he felt that he would be glad if he could only fall asleep and sleep until his heart was cold.

The winter grew old. St. Valentine's Day was coming soon again. When the calendar told him this he smiled a little sadly as he realized how differently he looked forward to it. A year before he had been all hope; now he was dread. The day would be full of bitter memories and regret for him.

To his annoyance business became very dull. He would have been glad to work even harder; but it was not to be. Then he decided to have some desirable alterations made in his office. He had carpenters called in. Desks were moved; partitions were torn down. His own heavy desk had not been moved for many a day. He stood idly by as the workmen removed the partition against which it had stood. There between the side of the desk and the wooden wall were some papers. These were handed to him. Most of them were unimportant; but his heart gave a leap as he saw one of them.

It was a large and now dirt-stained envelope addressed in his own hand-writing to Katharine Benham. With trembling hands he opened it, and there was his valentine of a year before. And to-morrow was St. Valentine's Day come again!

With heart so full that he could scarcely breathe he sat down where he could and wrote a little note in which he told how his valentine had been lost; but that now he sent it and the little verse would say for him then what he would have been glad to have it say the year before or at any time.

In the morning—St. Valentine's Day morning—he received a valentine. It had but one word; but that was the sweetest he had ever read.

"Come!" it said.

Then when he called upon Katharine she told him, how the year before she had received valentines from her friends and her acquaintances and from people she cared for not at all; but from him, for whom she cared so much, nothing had come at all. She was disappointed, and then she was angry because some one had sent her a cruel one laughing at her love. That was the one she did not show him. Then he had left her so abruptly, and for a year she too had been very unhappy.

"But we will make it all up to one another in the years to come," he said, and as he kissed her she repeated these words from an old song:

"My true love hath my heart and I have his,
By just exchange one to the other given.
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss;
There never was a better bargain driven.
My true love hath my heart and I have his."

I GUARANTEE BIG WAGES My correspondence has so rapidly increased due to the tremendous sale of my preparation, Gloria Water, for the complexion, that I guarantee good wages to ladies who will do writing for me at home. Address in own handwriting with stamped envelope, Miss Edna L. Smythe, Box 1008, South Bend, Ind. Price 75¢ a bottle

YOU WANT THIS Wishing to introduce our work among your acquaintances we make you the following bona-fide offer: Send us a small picture of yourself or any member of your family; we will make from it one of our celebrated crayon portraits, ABSOLUTELY FREE OF CHARGE or forfeit \$100. We believe that one of our elegant hand-stippled portraits in your home will do more good than any other advertising. Owing to our large business we can pack the portrait carefully and DELIVER IT TO YOU WITH ALL CHARGES PAID for only 90c. By taking advantage of the above offer within 30 days you will receive a fine portrait worth from \$10. to \$20.

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THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME.

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RICHER THAN THE CALIFORNIA GOLD FIELDS.

ONE NUGGET of Pure Gold weighing Eleven (11) Pounds, value \$3,120, recently picked up in this region. (See N. Y. Financial and Mining Record.) A DIAMOND from this section now owned by Col. HENRY DEMING, of Harrisburg, worth \$2,500. Rubies, Garnets and Aqua-Marines.

MILLIONS IN GOLD AND GEMS.

Every Claim Holder stands the chance of making just such marvelous finds. Forty Thousand Dollars in Gold was taken in five months from the edge of a piece of swamp land, (see N. Y. Sun, Sunday, June 7th, 1891), by man named Smalley and 3 men.

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Free Claims will not be given away much longer. Write immediately if you want a fortune. Reliable Agents of standing and integrity wanted.

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This excellent variety is distinguished from all others by its large stiff stalks, as shown in the engraving, standing up like a tree without support of any kind. It bears very abundantly of large, bright red tomatos, very smooth, and of fine flavor; it is extremely early and entirely free from rot; the leaves are very curly and of a very dark green, almost black, making the plant very ornamental as well as useful.

FINCH'S EVERGREEN CUCUMBER

A very handsome variety of superior quality, firm and crisp, of a dark green color, growing from 10 to 12 inches in length, and immensely productive.

FINCH'S SURE HEAD CABBAGE

Is all head and sure to head. Very uniform in size, firm and fine in texture, excellent in quality, and a good keeper. Alfred Ross, of Penn Yan, N. Y., grows a head which weighed 64½ pounds.

I will send a Packet each of Tomato, Cucumber and Cabbage with my Illustrated Catalogue, for only 25 cents in Silver or 28 cents in Stamps.

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This rapid growing Vine, with its beautiful heart-shaped leaves, glossy green peculiar foliage, and delicate white blossoms, emitting a delicious cinnamon fragrance, will grow from 10 to 30 feet in a single season, and for covering Arbors, Screens and Verandas is without a rival. I will send 5 BULBS FREE, and postpaid, to every person sending me 25 cents for the above Tree Tomato Collection, the bulbs will produce 5 Beautiful Vines exactly the same in every respect as I have been selling for One Dollar. Address plainly

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Every person sending SILVER for this collection will receive extra a packet of the Mansfield Tomato (also known as the Prize) which has been grown over nine feet in height, bearing fruit of good quality, weighing from one to two pounds each.

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Mr. Finch is perfectly reliable and trustworthy.—Ed



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Why we show you such a sweet pretty Linen Handkerchief for, just as your time has or is about to run out, well we have so many GOOD THINGS in store for COMFORT readers the next six months, that we want EVERY ONE who has ever taken our monthly to be sure and renew, so not to fail and get the great benefit that will come from the many improvements and NEW DEPARTMENTS that will be added, therefore we have got this special inducement to give you: To ANY ONE already a subscriber who will RENEW NOW for 6 months at 15¢, or 1 year at 25¢, we will send ABSOLUTELY FREE one of these elegant LINEN HANDKERCHIEFS. They are white, but handsomely decorated in the corners and on edges with flowers, vines, etc., etc. in red, blue, pink and other colors, and are over a third of a yard square. They are really a serviceable and valuable handkerchief for ladies and children, and we give you this chance to secure them GRATUIT. RENEW TO-DAY and we will send handkerchief postpaid. We cannot renew the offer as it is only for this time only. To any one sending us a club of 12 six months subscribers at 15¢ each, we will give 1-2 dozen of these handkerchiefs which you can use or sell for 10 or 15¢ each.

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YOU GET A PRIZE

Whether FIRST or LAST IF You Read THIS Rebus!

U R W

\$200 in Gold To the first person sending a correct answer to the above rebus before Saturday, April 30th 1892; to the one giving the next correct answer, \$100; to the third \$50, and to the next 15 persons sending in the correct answer we will give \$5 to each.

To the person sending in the last correct answer we will give \$100 in Gold; to the next to the last, \$50; to the next, \$25, and to the next 10 persons (should there be so many who send in the correct answer) \$5 to each. With your answer send 25¢ cash, postal note, or 30¢ in stamps for a subscription to our Illustrated 16 page Paper, The American Fire-side, worth a dollar. This issue will announce the result of the contest, with names and addresses of the winners. We have given away over \$100,000 in prizes and premiums to our subscribers in the past three years and now have over 500,000 Circulation. You are Wise if you solve this rebus and send an answer at once. Write your answer and name and address plainly, and enclose subscription money to THE AM. FIRE-SIDE, Wash. & Sussex Sts., Jersey City, N. J.

SOME NOTES ON FEBRUARY.

SUGGESTED BY OUR TITLE PAGE.

The fourteenth of February is the day devoted to that patron saint of lovers, St. Valentine. The origin of this ancient custom comes to us from England where St. Valentine's day is observed with even greater enthusiasm than here. Valentine himself was an ancient Roman Bishop much distanced for his many noble traits of character, and particularly for his great interest in young people, who began to taste the sweets of love's young dream. As in every case of this kind, mischievous people have contrived to burlesque the significance of St. Valentine's day, and the consequence is the introduction of those horrid caricatures, the comic valentine. Nothing can be in worse taste than the sending of these savage pictures, and I would advise all my friends to beware of the practice; it can rarely be done with safety, and the pain thus inflicted is not soon forgotten.

On the other hand, the sending of a pretty valentine is one of the pleasantest ways of declaring an interest in the recipient. Many a bashful swain has found escape from his embarrassment through this delightful channel, and the first tender awakening to a new passion has been revealed by the delicate tracery with its bewitching words of sweetness. It forms one of the garden spots of life, and many a heart dates its happiness from the fourteenth of February.

St. Valentine's day has also been a great favorite with the poets. Among the first to canonize the lover's saint was Shakespeare, who has in turn been followed by nearly every prominent writer since. Books have been written and stories told of St. Valentine ever since the beginning of the Christian Era, and his admirers grow in number every day. It is the one day sacred to the divine passion.

But the true proper ceremony of St. Valentine's day was the drawing of a kind of lottery, followed by ceremonies not much unlike what is generally called the game of forfeits. Misson, a learned traveler, of the early part of the last century, gives apparently a correct account of the principal ceremonial of the day. "On the eve of St. Valentine's day," he says, "the young folks in England and Scotland, by a very ancient custom, celebrate a little festival. An equal number of maids and bachelors get together; each writes their true or some feigned name upon separate billets, which they roll up, and draw by way of lots, the maid taking the men's billets, and the men the maids'; so that each of the young men lights upon a girl that he calls his valentine, and each of the girls upon a young man whom she calls hers. By this means each has two valentines; but the man sticks faster to the valentine that has fallen to him than to the valentine to whom he has fallen. Fortune having thus divided the company into so many, the valentines give balls and treats to their mistresses, wear their billets several days upon their bosoms or sleeves, and this little sport often ends in love."

"A forward Miss in the 'Connoisseur,' a series of essays published in 1754-56, thus advertises to other notions with respect to the day: 'Last Friday was Valentine's Day, and the night before, I got five bay-leaves, and pinned four of them to the four corners of my pillow, and pinned the fifth to the middle; and then if I dreamt of my sweetheart, Betty said we should be married before the year was out. But to make it more sure, I boiled an egg hard, and took out the yolk and filled it with salt; and when I went to bed, ate it, shell and all, without speaking or drinking after it. We also wrote our lovers' names upon bits of paper, and rolled them up in clay, and put them into water; and the first that rose was to be our valentine. Would you think it? Mr. Blossom was my man. I lay abed and shut my eyes all the morning, for I would not have seen another man before him for all the world.'

February is also entitled to the distinction of having witnessed the birth of George Washington, the Father of his country. Within the brief period of its existence this country has produced more than its share of eminent men, but historians agree that in point of public influence, love of his country, and magnificent achievements, Washington stands without a parallel.

Among the greatest characters Washington stands unique for the purity of his purpose, his spotless integrity and unselfish devotion to the cause of liberty and equality. Himself an aristocrat and slaveholder, Washington early realized the horrors of the system, and resolved to have no further part in slavery so far as he was personally concerned.

But little is really known of Washington's early life, and we are indebted to the fertile imagination of his favorite biographer Weems for the somewhat engrossing story of the Cherry Tree. The elder Washington returned home one day to witness the ruin of a favorite cherry tree. It had been ruthlessly cut to pieces and the stern parent was exceedingly wroth. He strode angrily



COMMENTS ON COOKING.

DEAR COUSINS:
Would you have me go begging for recipes? I'm sure you wouldn't, but really I fear that I shall have to do so before long, if some one is not more liberal. Please don't forget your cousin, even if she is more domestic and stay-at-home than Aunt Minerva or Busy Bee.

Now I will see what the copy drawer has for us this month. It looks rather empty, but perhaps I am deceived in its appearance. And first of all, here is a fine lot of receipts from an old contributor.

ORANGE MERINGUE.

Slice 6 peeled oranges in a dish and pour over 1 pint of milk boiled with 1-2 cup of sugar and 2 tablespoonsfuls of cornstarch, allowed to cool. Make meringue of the whites of 3 eggs beaten stiff and brown in oven.

HARRISON CAKE.

1 cup of sour milk, 2 cups of molasses, 1 cup of brown sugar, 1 cup of raisins, 1 cup of currants, 1-2 cup of butter, 1 teaspoonful of cloves, 1-2 teaspoonsfuls of soda, enough flour to have dough stiff enough to drop off spoon; bake in 3 or 4 layers, icing between flavored with vanilla.

CRYSTALLIZED POP CORN.

Put into an iron kettle 1 tablespoon of water and 1 teaspoonful of sugar; boil until ready to candy, then throw in 3 qts. of nicely popped corn. Stir briskly until the candy is evenly distributed over the corn. Set the kettle from the fire and stir until it is cooled a little. Then every grain will be separate and crystallized. Care must be taken not to have the stove too hot, lest the corn will be scorched.

COKE MEAL PUDDING OR POKE.

1 cup of wheat flour, 1 egg, 1 spoonful of lard, 1 of sugar, 2 teaspoonsful salt, 1 of soda; mix with 1 quart buttermilk, add corn meal.

EGGLESS CAKE.

1 cup of sugar, 3 tablespoonsfuls of butter, 1 cup of sweet milk, 2 cups of flour, 2 teaspoons of baking powder.

NUT CAKE.

2-1/2 cups of sugar, 1 cup butter, 1 cup of sweet milk, 4 cups of flour, 3 eggs, whites and yolks beaten separately, 3 teaspoons of baking powder mixed in the flour.

FOR BETWEEN LAYERS.—Whites of 2 eggs, 1 tablespoonsful of powdered sugar to an egg, 1 cup of chopped hickory nuts or any other preferred nuts; frost the top with plain frosting and lay on whole nuts.

BUTTER TAFFY.

1 cup of sugar, 1-2 cup water, 1 teaspoonful molasses, butter the size of an egg, 2 teaspoons of vinegar.

ICE CREAM CANDY.

1 cup of sugar, 1-3 cup of water, 1-4 teaspoonsful cream tartar, butter size of an egg; boil all together 15 minutes, not stirring till taken from the fire, then add extract whatever preferred. Miss L. G. GRAMM, Cordelia, Penn.

Here are some answers to Cousin Pearl's request.

If Cousin Pearl will add the juice of one lemon to each pint of peach juice she will find that the acid destroys theropy nature of the peach and produces a sparkling and fine flavored jelly. Mrs. A. H. GOTTSCHALL, 210 Hummel St., Harrisburg, Pa.

Cousin Pearl wishes a recipe for

GRAHAM BREAD.

4 heaping cups of graham flour, 1 teaspoonful of salt, 1-2 coffee cup of molasses, 1 heaping teaspoonful saleratus, this last must be dissolved in a little hot water, this liquid must be stirred into the molasses until it foams well, pour it on the meal, and enough milk (or milk and water) to make the dough as stiff as cake mixture; put in two pans and bake until done.

ANNIE I. CRANDALL, Milton Junction, Wisc.

Now let us see what else we can find among the letters.

Cousin Ceres:—I send you a recipe for the benefit of COMFORT cousins.

ECONOMIC CAKE.

1 cup sugar, 1-2 cup butter, whites of 3 eggs, 1-2 cup sweet milk, 2 cups flour, 1 heaping teaspoonful baking powder; bake in two layers in a hot oven.

FROSTING.—Yolks of 3 eggs, 1 cup pulverized sugar, 1 tea-spoonful vanilla; beat 20 minutes and spread between the layers and on top.

ADA SAMPSON.

Dear Cousin Ceres:—I have seen so many recipes and such nice ones, I thought I would send you a good recipe for

BENTON CAKES.

1 qt. flour, 5 ounces butter, 2 teaspoons best baking powder, wet with water and make a soft dough as for biscuit, roll very thin and cut round; bake in hot oven 10 or 15 minutes.

Here is another recipe for

CORN MEAL CAKES.

Take 2 cups yellow corn meal, sift, and put 1 teaspoon salt in meal, pour on boiling water until it is in a stiff mass, let cool, add 1 tablespoon butter, 1 cup flour, enough water to mix rather stiff; bake on hot griddle.

JENNIE A. M.

I will send a cake recipe where the yolks of the eggs are used for frosting, for the benefit of Magnolia May.

LEMON PUDDING.

1 quart sweet milk, 1 pint bread crumbs, 1 cup sugar, a lump butter size of an egg, yolks of 4 eggs, grated rind of 1 lemon; bake 1-2 hour, then take whites of the eggs, 1 cup sugar and the juice of the lemon. Beat the whites until stiff, add the sugar and lemon juice, spread it on the pudding, place in the oven 3 minutes to brown.

NOODLES.

2 eggs, butter size of a walnut, 3 tablespoons sour cream, flour enough to make a rather stiff dough; knead, roll out very thin and cut in narrow strips; cook 1-2 hour or less.

COOKIES.

2 cups of sugar, 1 cup sour milk or cream, 1 cup shortening, 1-2 butter and 1-2 lard, 1 tea-spoon soda.

CREAM CAKE.

2 cups flour, 1 cup of sugar, 1-2 cup butter, 2-3 cup sweet milk, 2 eggs, 2 teaspoons baking powder; put whipped cream between layers.

I would like for you to send me a recipe for making pie crust of lard, flour and water, how much of each to take.

COMFORT'S FRIEND.

Perhaps the cousins would like a nice recipe for

CREAM CAKES.

Put in a stewpan 1 cup water, 1-2 cup butter, when boiling add 1 cup flour, stir in briskly. Take from the stove and cool and then add 3 eggs lightly beaten, stir until smooth. Drop on buttered tins and bake in a quick oven about 20 minutes. This makes 12 cakes.

LULA M. ROBERTS, Milton, N. H.

FEATHER CAKE.

1 egg, 1 cup of sugar, 1 cup sweet milk, 1-4 cup butter, melted, 2 cups flour, 2 teaspoons baking powder.

BUTTERMILK PIE.

One cup sugar, 1 teaspoon butter, beat together, 1 egg, 1 cup flour, 1 cup buttermilk, flavor with lemon; bake with under crust only.

ICING FOR CAKES.

Take the white of 1 egg, beat to a froth, add 2-3 cup of white sugar and beat till smooth; put on the cake while warm, flavor if you wish.

SARAH E. HESS, Central, Pa.

FRUIT JELLY CAKE.

2 cups of sugar, 2-3 of a cup of butter, the same of sweet milk, 4 eggs, 3 cups of flour, 3 teaspoons of baking powder, stir together then divide into 3 equal parts; into one part stir 1 tablespoonful of molasses, 1 cup of chopped raisins, 1 teaspoonful of cloves, 1 of cinnamon, and 1 nutmeg; bake, put together with jelly or frosting.

POKE CAKE.

1 cup of salt pork, 1 cup dried apples, 1 cup of raisins, 1 cup molasses, 2 cups of sugar, 3 eggs, 1 tablespoonful of soda, spice to taste. Chop the pork and raisins together, add 1 cup of water.

MRS. HATTIE DUNHAM.

Dear Cousin Ceres—I will send you some recipes which I know to be "tried and true."

MILK MUFFINS.

1 cup of milk, 3 eggs, 1 tablespoonful of butter, 1-1/2 tablespoonsfuls baking powder, flour enough to make the batter a little thicker than for pancakes; bake in a quick oven.

LEMON CAKE.

1 cup of butter (packed), 2 scant cups of sugar, 10 eggs—yolks and whites beaten separately—one small cup of milk, juice and rind of a lemon, 1 small teaspoonful of soda, flour to make tolerably thin batter (a little over 3 cups).

COTTAGE PUDDING.

1 cup of sugar, 1 tablespoonful of butter, 2 eggs, 1 cup sweet milk, 3 cups flour, 1-2 teaspoonful of soda, 1 teaspoonful of cream tartar, sifted with the flour, 1 teaspoonful of salt; rub the butter and sugar together, beat in the yolks, then the milk and soda, the salt, and the beaten whites alternately with the flour. Bake in a buttered mould; turn out upon a dish; cut in slices; eat with liquid sauce. PANTRY.

SUBSCRIBER.

GOOD YEAST RAISING.

Boil a handful of hops in 2 quarts of water 10 minutes, then strain and add 6 good sized potatoes (grated), 1 cup sugar, 1 tablespoonful of salt, sometimes I put a spoonful of ginger in also. Let the potatoes and hop water simmer 1-2 hour, when lukewarm, add 1 cup of good yeast, let it rise. This is the best recipe I have ever tried for making jug yeast. It should be kept in a cool place.

SUGAR COOKIES.

Here is a cheap recipe for sugar cookies: 2 cups white sugar, 1 cup shortening, butter or lard, 1 cup sour milk, 1 level teaspoon saleratus dissolved in milk, season with cinnamon, 1-2 teaspoons.

Mrs. MAY ORRIS.

I thank all who have sent recipes, and would be grateful for a few more good ones, plainly written.

Yours in the kitchen,

Cousin Ceres, (Care of COMFORT.)

CONSUMPTION CURED.

An old physician, retired from practice, had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma and all Throat and Lung Affections, also positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all who wish it, this recipe in German, French or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail, by addressing, with stamp, naming this paper, W. A. NOYES, 820 Powers' Block, Rochester, N. Y.

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BENTON CAKES. 1 qt. flour, 5 ounces butter, 2 teaspoons best baking powder, wet with water and make a soft dough as for biscuit, roll very thin and cut round; bake in hot oven 10 or 15 minutes.

Here is another recipe for

CORN MEAL CAKES. Take 2 cups yellow corn meal, sift, and put 1 teaspoon salt in meal, pour on boiling water until it is in a stiff mass, let cool, add 1 tablespoon butter, 1 cup flour, enough water to mix rather stiff; bake on hot griddle.

JENNIE A. M.

I will send a cake recipe where the yolks of the eggs are used for frosting, for the benefit of Magnolia May.

LEMON PUDDING.

1 quart sweet milk, 1 pint bread crumbs, 1 cup sugar, a lump butter size of an egg, yolks of 4 eggs, grated rind of 1 lemon; bake 1-2 hour, then take whites of the eggs, 1 cup sugar and the juice of the lemon. Beat the whites until stiff, add the sugar and lemon juice, spread it on the pudding, place in the oven 3 minutes to brown.

NOODLES.

2 eggs, butter size of a walnut, 3 tablespoons sour cream, flour enough to make a rather stiff dough; knead, roll out very thin and cut in narrow strips; cook 1-2 hour or less.

COOKIES.

2 cups of sugar, 1 cup sour milk or cream, 1 cup shortening, 1-2 butter and 1-2 lard, 1 tea-spoon soda.

CREAM CAKE.

2 cups flour, 1 cup of sugar, 1-2 cup butter, 2-3 cup sweet milk, 2 eggs, 2 teaspoons baking powder; put whipped cream between layers.

I would like for you to send me a recipe for making pie crust of lard, flour and water, how much of each to take.

COMFORT'S FRIEND.

Please mention COMFORT when you write.

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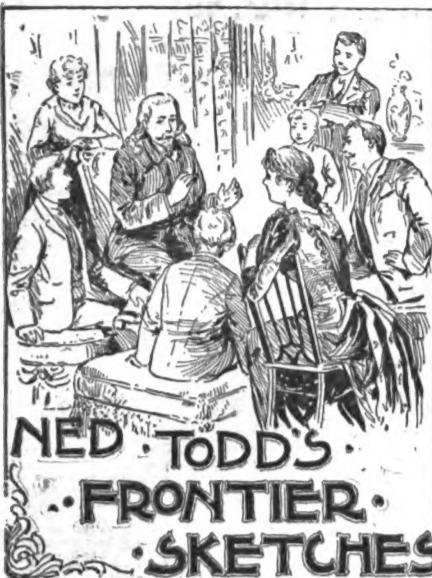
LADIES I have a perfectly harmless, simple, sure recipe which will beautify the complexion, remove wrinkles. It eradicates tan, freckles, and impurities, leaving skin blooming cheeks, and clear, soft and beautiful complexion. I will gladly send this recipe to any lady who will send me six one-cent postage for postage, &c. MRS. A. D. WARD, B. 2, Avon, N.Y.

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<b



NED TODD'S FRONTIER SKETCHES

THE CRAZY BOOMER.—THE BENDERS' DEN.

Somewhat it seemed of late that everybody wanted night to come. Ned Todd had declared he would tell no stories in the daytime.

"What do I want to be a talkin' for and keepin' you folks from your work," said Ned Todd.

This famous backwoods hunter, detective and guide, we presume, is familiar to all of our readers as he is to everybody in the territory of Oklahoma. But for fear there should be some who do not know him well, we will state that Ned Todd is about forty-two years of age, a man brave as a lion, who has had more adventures than any other man living. Is noted for his courage, kindness of heart and his general desire to please everybody.

He was stopping at the Sturgeon House in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Among his many friends were Winnie Dawson, a pretty girl of sixteen years of age who was teaching a subscription school in Oklahoma, and Jack Royal, a young clerk who everybody said was "sweet on Winnie," then came in two gentlemen who are known to the literary world. They were Tom P. Morgan and John H. Whitson, who have both established quite a reputation as story writers.

"I have come to Oklahoma just on purpose to see Ned Todd," Morgan declared, "and pump him dry."

"You have reason to, Tom," John H. Whitson answered.

"You mean something scurrilous, John."

"No I don't."

"Oh, I can tell by your eye."

"I merely mean, Tom, that you have got to get your ideas from some one."

Tom Morgan winced under this thrust, but when Tom saw the laugh about to be turned on him he quickly retorted:

"I get my ideas just like you get your money, John, I borrow them."

"Yes, but I pay back the money I borrow and you was never known to return borrowed idea."

"Well, if I have any old, worn out, exhausted idea of yours, John, you are welcome to it," said Tom Morgan.

"Here comes Ned Todd, boys," said Jack Royal. "Come, now, hush your nonsense and maybe we can get a story from him."

"Yes, I would rather hear him tell a story than those two authors quarrel."

"Why, bless your pretty soul my dear Winnie," began Whitson.

"Hold on, John, or I'll tell your wife, and she will bring you back on your Kansas ranch in a hurry."

"Don't interrupt me, Tom, when I am talking to the fair sex. That's always the way with a bachelor."

"What were you going to say to me, Mr. Whitson, when you were interrupted by Mr. Morgan?"

"I was going to tell you that Tom and I never quarrel. We've got to have something to sharpen our wits on, you know, just as you sharpen a knife on a stone."

"Yes, I am the steel and he is the stone," put in Morgan.

"Go it, Tom, you are sure to have the last word."

Before the authors could say any more Ned Todd was seated and Miss Winnie drawing a chair up close to him, and Jack Royal drawing a seat closer to her, both said:

"Now Mr. Todd."

"Well now!" and Ned Todd smiled.

"Won't you tell us some stories to-night?"

"Did I promise I would?"

"You did."

"Then I will. I make it a point to never make a promise which I don't keep."

Ned Todd took out his pipe and some tobacco.

"I have that as a good omen," said Whitson.

"Whenever Ned Todd takes out his pipe and tobacco a story is not far away."

The eyes of pretty Winnie Dawson were gleaming as bright as diamonds.

"Now, Miss Winnie, I must ask a privilege of you," said Ned.

"What?"

"To smoke."

"It's granted."

"Is smoking offensive?"

"No, not when you are telling such thrilling stories."

The rumor that Ned Todd was firing up and was going to spin some yarns brought several more persons into the large sitting-room of the Sturgeon House, among them Mr. Sturgeon's two boys, Robert and Phil.

"What do you want to hear to-night, Miss Winnie?"

"Tell us something about Oklahoma."

"Oklahoma?"

"Yes, Oklahoma before anyone lived here."

"And while so many were trying to live there," put in Jack.

"You mean tell you a story about boomers."

"That's it. A story about boomers."

"Very well, I will tell you a story about a crazy boomer I once knew. He was a typical boomer this fellow was. He had come here at an early day and stuck to the borders of Oklahoma with a persistence and a determination that were admirable. Had he evinced as much pluck at almost any of the many callings in life, he would certainly have become rich in time."

"Well, he entered with Payne into Oklahoma. He traveled to Rockfalls and when the town was laid out he located some town lots, staked them off, and laid out a farm."

"Some of the other people who were on this raid built houses and Rockfalls became quite a city, as everybody knows, but Gobe Hart, as this boomer was known, had no money to build a house."

"He merely put up a tent on his farm, ploughed three or four acres of ground and seemed happy and contented."

"He had at last reached the promised land. The boomers had made the invasion so secretly that no one suspected them, and they were not found until late in fall or winter."

"One day when the ground was covered with snow a rumor came that soldiers were coming. At the time I was a government scout and had been sent to find the boomers. I was not long in locating them at Rockfalls and so reported at Port Hill."

"A lieutenant and thirty men were sent to drive them out and destroy their improvements. Now Gobe Hart had no improvements to destroy, save a chicken house and a pig pen. When the soldiers came he went into his tent, got his gun and swore he would fight."

"His wife seized his gun and tore it from his hand. By this time the lieutenant was at the tent."

"I assure you," he said, "you shall none of you be harmed. We only have orders to remove you out of the territory."

"But my farm," roared Hart.

"You have no farm."

"Look at my improvements."

"The lieutenant laughed and told him to pack them in his wagon. He went then to order the houses

burned and Gobe Hart sat down on the tongue of his wagon and began to rave and swear and tore his hair from his head by handfuls. I was with the soldiers and went to him to know what was the matter, and he rose and seizing my arm cried:

"See, it is this way for thirty years I have waited and watched for this. I have come at last to Oklahoma and it is mine. Look!"

"And he pointed to the bleak hills about him.

"See all those broad acres, those great farms bending under corn and grain. They are mine. See those great houses and those bins of corn and wheat. All—mine. I have them at last. I have earned them by waiting, but now they've come to take them—they shan't do it. My gun—my gun! They are all on fire—I will die resisting—I will die for my home."

"He looked and saw the houses on fire and tried to reach his gun. The man was near insane. I seized him and held him with difficulty. You don't know how strong a mad man can be till you tackle him once. He fought, kicked and bit. We had to tie him and he frothed at the mouth like a mad man. I never saw his like before and pray I never may again."

"See my great farms all on fire—all on fire, he cried. 'I am ruined, everything is gone and I am ruined.'

"In vain we tried to reason with him. He would not give heed to us. We placed him in his wagon and he was started out of the territory.

"The first night we camped he broke away and ran over the prairie. For two days we hunted for him and found him at last wandering half famished on the prairie. He ran from us—ran as I never saw a man run before. I pursued him and caught him with a lasso and we brought him back, but that night he died raving of golden fields, of grain and rich harvests. We buried him on the plains, and on a stone which marks his grave is rudely cut, 'A crazy Boomer."

Ned Todd paused. His pipe had gone out and he proceeded to replenish it and said:

"I promised you a love story this evening, but from appearances, which speak louder than words there is a 'Love Story' in progress between two of this company to night, and a second one could not certainly add anything to the interest which is seemingly being taken in the first."

"And then to see Winnie Dawson blush, and Jack Royal edge his chair about one inch further from her, made all present think that Ned Todd's bump of perception was well developed, and after a hearty laugh at Winnie's expense, Ned remarked:

"I'll give ye a story of a woman who once roamed over this country. Although a woman she was as desperate as any man that ever lived. She was bold, daring, cruel and unscrupulous."

"What did she do?" asked Winnie.

"She was a robber."

"A robber, a woman a robber!"

"Yes, she was not only a robber, but a chieftainess of a band of robbers who made desperate names, and the Lord only knows how many murders they committed."

"What was her name?" Jack Royal asked.

"Belle Star, the bandit queen," Ned Todd answered. Everybody started at the name, for many had heard of Belle Star before.

"I have heard of her," said Jack Royal.

"I wrote a poem about her," put in Tom P. Morgan.

"Which never was published," said John H. Whitson.

"It was; Frank Leslie's gave me ten dollars for it."

"Did they?" put in Whitson. "I wrote a short story about her for which I got fifty dollars."

"The editor was certainly drunk when he accepted it," said Morgan.

"Now look here, if you two authors are going to keep up that squabble all the time," put in Ned Todd, "I'd like to know when I'm to get a chance to spin my yarn."

Tom Morgan and John Whitson were the best of friends and their sallies of humor and repartee never for a moment ruffled the tempers. Both declared they were done and Ned Todd went on.

"Several years ago a woman came up the Arkansas river from Little Rock as far as Fort Gibson. She was a very rich woman and in great distress on account of the mysterious disappearance of her husband. I was at Fort Gibson at the time and the Lieutenant of the fort sent for me to come and see the woman and try to obtain some clew of her husband. She said he had come into the Indian Territory to buy cattle and she had not heard of him any more.

"He was last seen near Webber's Falls in the Choctaw nation. Would I try to find him. Of course I would. She had a photograph of her husband which she gave me and I took it and went to Muskogee and there hired a Choctaw guide who said he knew all the country among those wild hills called the Seven Devils. We went to Eufaula and mounted on two tough mustangs set out for the country below Webber's Falls. We soon reached a wild forest which was entirely strange to me. Night came on and thick clouds rose in the west portending a coming storm. It was soon on us. My guide deserted me and went off in the woods. I was alone. The rain came down in torrents.

"No doubt my guide was a part of the famous bandit known as Belle Star's gang I thought, and the thought did not tend to make me any the more comfortable. I quit the main road and plunging into the woods led my horse after me, for I could not ride owing to the darkness and thick branches.

"After a while I saw the gleam of a light in the distance and went to it. It proved to be a cabin and the only person I found there was a woman about forty years of age. She was dark with short black hair and black eyes. That woman was Belle Star, though I knew her not at that time. I asked permission to remain over night at her house which was granted. Then she prepared me supper and put me to bed in an adjoining room.

"I don't know why I felt nervous. I had only a short piece of candle with me, and I got up as soon as I was alone and lighted it. I then saw what seemed a pile of blankets and saddles in another corner, and went to examine it. Under the blankets lay a dead man. He had been stabbed that very night in the bed in which I was trying to sleep. For a moment I was about as badly scared as any one could be. I examined the dead man as soon as I recovered enough to do so and saw that it was the missing man I had come to find. I dressed in a hurry, and buckled on my revolvers. A few moments later I heard someone at the door.

"Who is there?" I asked.

"Do you want anything?" said a voice.

"No."

"Then someone went away."

"I fancied I could hear them talking and saying that he was not asleep. And he was not asleep nor very likely to sleep that night."

"An hour passed and I had made up my mind to a desperate plan. I took my place at the side of the door, a revolver in hand to use as a club rather than a pistol and when someone came again to the door I made no answer."

"He sleeps," said a voice.

"The fastening to the door was easily removed, and a man entered."

"Crash came my pistol butt down on his head, and he fell like a bullock without a word. Another followed with a lantern and down he went. The third was Belle Star herself; I covered her with a revolver and made her tie my two would-be murderers, then followed her with my cocked revolver to my horse, made her saddle and bridle him, mounted and galloped away. Next day I went with a force of men, and the house was deserted save the body of the murdered man. It was several years before Belle Star met her fate. She was disguised as a man engaged in a desperate stage robbery when she was shot and killed."

"Everyone sat in breathless suspense through the thrilling recital of Ned Todd's experience with Belle Star, and after a few minutes pause, Winnie Dawson asked for the Love Story; and as that seemed to be uppermost in her thoughts, Ned promised to give them a good love story the next time they were gathered around him for an evening's entertainment.

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Gold Hunting in California.

HOW THE BIG BONANZA MINE THAT YIELDED
THREE HUNDRED MILLIONS WAS DISCOVERED.

JOHN W. MACKAY, A POOR IRISH LAD, LEAPS TO A
GREAT FORTUNE.

The full story of the California gold hunters has never been told. The many privations, and dangers encountered by the hardy pioneers were enough to discourage the most hardy, and many a pile of bleaching bones, marks the spot where the emigrant met a cruel fate, sometimes by thirst and starvation, but more often by the bloodthirsty Indians who were ever on the alert to commit some deed of barbarism.

The sudden change in the fortunes of the gold hunters has never been equalled in the annals of mining. Men who to-day were worth a few pennies, in the morning found themselves possessed of more



ATTACKED BY INDIANS.

wealth than they ever dreamed of even in their wildest moments. It cost a man a dollar to get his shirt washed, and a new one was simply an impossibility, no matter what price he offered. Shovels and picks sold at fabulous sums, and carpenters earned twenty-five dollars a day. Farm produce was not to be had except in rare instances, and the farmer of '49 who had any sort of farm, had a property equal to a gold mine. The farm hand was in paradise; whatever price he chose to put on his labor was cheerfully paid by the farmer, who was glad to get him at a price all the way from ten to twenty dollars per day and find, If a farmer's wife happened to have a spinning wheel, and a few yards of cloth more than she needed for her own wants, it was quickly and eagerly purchased at a figure sufficient to keep the fortunate spinner in silks all the rest of her life. It rained gold! it poured gold! all around nothing was heard of, nothing was thought of, but gold! gold! gold!

But of course in the midst of all this wealth there were some who never shared in it at all; whose ill luck seemed determined to cling to them despite their surroundings, and who finally became desperate and abandoned the search only to find themselves miserably poor, and worse off than when they left home. Some became saloon keepers, others sought employment in the various mines as section hands, and a few succeeded in locating themselves in a legitimate and respectable business.

It was to one of these mines that John W. Mackay, the great California millionaire, first offered his services. He was a bright, energetic young Irishman,



MACKAY IN THE GOLD MINES.

and soon won the confidence of the owners. In one of his trips to San Francisco he became intimate with Flood & O'Brien, who kept a saloon on Market St., much frequented by miners in those days. Flood & O'Brien had about 10,000 dollars in cash, and another man named Fair had some interest in the mine where Mackay worked as foreman. Mackay's men were the men who made the first cuts when a vein was to be opened. They had worked several months, and as yet there were no signs of pay dirt. Under such circumstances stock in the mine was at a fearful discount, and was worth but a few dollars a share. Still if gold was struck, the stock would advance rapidly, and the fortunate holders would become rich. Mackay had a salary of \$500.00 per month for his services as foreman and had saved a little, but not enough to be of service should any great change occur in the property of the mine. It was finally agreed that Flood & O'Brien and J. G. Fair were to wait advices from Mackay, and if he reported favorably they were to buy the mine, and he was to receive one-quarter. On his return to the mine, Mackay took his position at the head of the gang, and one afternoon a sudden change in the rock became apparent. The drill which he used seemed to sink into a soft substance. He immediately ordered the men to quit work, returned to the place and made his own tests. All around was a solid big boulder. This he pierced in every side, and each "tryer" came out with a solid coil of gold in the end. How far the gold extended he could not say, but enough was discovered to answer his purpose. He stopped work in that vicinity, and telegraphed to Flood & O'Brien. In a day the stock was quietly purchased, and the famous firm since known as the Bonanza Kings came into existence. No one, not even Mackay, knew the extent of the find. Out of that one pocket more than 3,000,000 were taken every month with scarcely any labor. The ore lay inside of this boulder, almost one solid mass. In fact so rich was this ore that in passing through the crusher, rocks had to be mixed with it to prevent clogging the wheels. It is probably the



"GOLD AT LAST!"

richest gold mine the world ever produced. When the news finally reached San Francisco, the wildest excitement prevailed. The saloon of Flood & O'Brien was surrounded by an excited mob eagerly discussing news of the great discovery. In less than twenty-four hours these men who had counted themselves rich with trifles more than ten thousand dollars suddenly found themselves worth that many millions, and growing richer every moment. Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp was thrown into the shade. In all

the history of sudden wealth there is none to equal the story of the Bonanza Kings. Every one of them were poor men, and without any particular education. That they had brains has been proven by the astute manner in which they took care of the fortune thus suddenly acquired.

The wife of Mr. Mackay is a leading society lady in London, and the magnificence of her jewels and the splendor of her entertainments are something that dazzle even country farmer for its aristocratic bearings. Her daughter is a princess, having married the Prince of Collona, and she is grandmother to a boy who will some day succeed to the title. At the time of her acquaintance with Mackay she was the wife of a worthless fellow, who was good enough to die, leaving her one child, the princess referred to above. John Mackay boarded with her in those days, and when she became a widow lost no time in offering his heart and his hand.

Mrs. Mackay, however, does not like the papers to speak of her early life, and recently sued an English publisher for saying that she made her husband's acquaintance in the somewhat humble role of laundress. There is nothing discreditable in the story, and there is abundant evidence to prove that the facts are nearly correct. But the lapse of years makes it difficult to prove them, and the English newspaper had to apologize and pay costs. It makes no difference with sensible people whether Mr. Mackay made Mrs. Mackay's acquaintance when taking home his shirts of a Saturday night, or whether she met him at a ball. The fact that she was a poor, lonely widdy struggling to support herself and child in a wild and somewhat lone community, doubtless touched his heart, and it is nothing that either need now feel disposed to conceal. But change of circumstance often changes the people themselves, and the lack of a coat of arms is sometimes keenly felt by millionaires who acquired their wealth in their shirt sleeves.

Altogether Mrs. Mackay, no less than her husband, is a distinguished member of English society, and furnishes food for much of the current gossip. Her dispute with the celebrated painter Messenier, was the source of much amusement to the people of both London and Paris. Messenier is the head of the great painters of France, and his work commands fabulous prices. Mrs. Mackay's portrait as painted by him was rejected. The artist was furious, and declined either to sell the picture or destroy it. Instead, he sent it to the Salon, after intimating that the lady's chief objection arose from the fact that the wrinkles and other evidences of age were too faithfully reproduced. As most celebrated women are grossly flattered in the portraits exposed for sale, the sinister remark of the artist was accepted as true, and the critics enjoyed themselves immensely, and the press on both sides of the channel for weeks and weeks discussed whether Mrs. Mackay's wrinkles were or were not too pronounced, whether her claw feet and sunken eyes were or were not caricatured.

All this did not prove pleasant reading for Mrs. Mackay, and it is quite certain that should the offending journals get within the pale of libel, it will fare hard with them. Mr. Mackay spends most of his time in New York, and is rarely present at his wife's social festivities. The best of feeling prevails, however, and the husband is left to follow his business interests, as they may demand his attention.

His other partners in the mine are still residents of San Francisco, and I suppose it would be hard to find another firm so famous, and yet composed of such retiring men as that of the Great Bonanza Firm of California.

A GIRL THAT MAKES MONEY.

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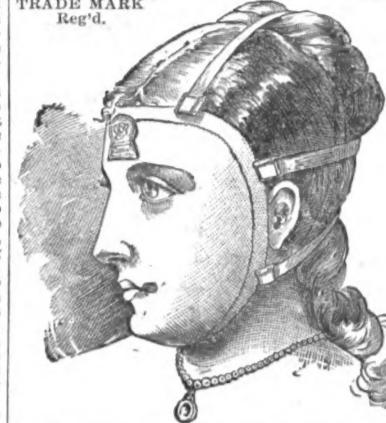
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MY DEAR FRIENDS:

As I sit by my window and watch the snowflakes fluttering slowly, softly down, covering the bare and desolate earth, the trees all cold and leafless, everything wrapped in the icy mantle of death, I wonder why it was so ordained. Why must the beautiful summer fade away? Why must the flowers die, the birds cease to sing, the balmy air grow chill and piercing? We cannot answer this oft-suggested question, only to say it is God's will, and life and death alike are in His hands.

So with our lives. We cannot understand why it is not always summer with us, why the beauty and sweetness of our living is taken away, and the funeral pall falls upon our dearest hopes. But take a lesson from Nature. Do the flowers die? Yes, but next year others, as beautiful, will bless the now barren stalks. The birds leave us, but in spring time the air will once more be filled with their songs. The trees stand bare and brown, but the resurrection life is in them, and with the opening spring they will burst into wondrous greenness and beauty. These are but an analogy of our life. Some day, it may be in this world, or perchance not until we have slept the dreamless sleep, the resurrection time will come to us, and our hopes, our joys, our lost days, our unsatisfied longings, will be perfected in glorious fruition.

"Some day all our birds shall sing,
Some day all our joy-bells ring,
Some day bloom our promised spring,
Some day—some sweet day."

I have such an interesting letter to give you this month from Physician. I know you will all enjoy his delightful reminiscences.

"Some of your readers write that they don't like Dickens. For one that has not had a wide scope of reading, an appreciation of his works must be an acquired taste. But to read him carefully, I don't see how one can very well help liking him. Where will you find a more pathetic incident in fiction than the death of Little Nell? Where a more interesting story for children than 'The Christmas Carol'? Where more genuine mirth than in 'PICKWICK PAPERS'? Each one of his stories is a study in human nature. Perhaps my own predilections may color my opinion, but it seems to me that one can gain much of pleasure and of knowledge in reading his novels. Another thing, they are all pure, although many of his characters are drawn from the lowest classes, yet they offer no immoral suggestions. A number of years ago I heard him read two of his short stories, after the reading I was introduced and took supper with him. One evening about a year later I was sauntering along the Champ Elysees in Paris; my attention was attracted by some music in one of the Cafes chantants which are located there. Entering I found a seat near the stage. During an intermission in the performance, I heard a gentleman sitting behind me give an order to a waiter for cigarettes and *cafe noir*. I recognised the voice, and turning, saw Charles Dickens. He always remembered faces and spoke to me at once, although it was more than a year since I had met him. I passed a very pleasant evening in his company. A year later, I was in London, I visited Westminster Abbey one afternoon in the early autumn. High in the nave, near the Poets corner, are several stained glass windows, through one of which the sunlight filtered, casting a yellow light upon the tessellated floor; and in the colored shadow cast by the autumnal sun, I read in brass letters sunk in the marble pavement at my feet: 'Charles Dickens, Born February the seventh, 1812, died June the ninth, 1870.' A few years ago, I had occasion to employ a lady as nurse for one of my family, who has remained since as housekeeper. She was a protege of Dickens, and had lived in his family for ten years. Through her I have learned much of Dickens' life, and also of his friends whom she knew, Thackeray, Jerrold, Lord Lytton, Wilkie Collins and many others. She is the heroine of one of his short stories, and was engaged to marry one of Dickens' friends whom he has pictured under the name of Sidney Carton in 'The Tale of Two Cities.' Some of COMFORT's readers have asked advice regarding choice of reading. I will be pleased to advise any who choose to write to me personally, enclosing self addressed, stamped envelope for reply.

W. E. ANTHONY, M.D.
64 John St., Providence, R. I."

I cannot but envy you the rare privilege of meeting one who is, to my mind, one of the greatest masters of fiction. His works have been my delight since childhood; I believe I read 'Barnaby Rudge' and 'Oliver Twist' before passing my tenth birthday. Those who do not care for Dickens lose much pleasure, and it is worth one's while to cultivate a taste for his somewhat peculiar style. His novels are always pure and elevating.

"I have gained much comfort from reading letters written by the cousins. I am one of the 'Shut Ins' and would be very glad to receive reading matter. Now, dear aunt, why can't we have birthday list, so that we 'Shut Ins' can remember each other with tokens of love? I have been a 'Shut In' 15 years and know all the weariness it brings. All are not like myself, deprived of father, mother, home and health, and yet I have much to praise God for. Are there any of our 'Shut Ins' who would like to join the 'Shut In' Society? If they will write to me sending stamp to cover expenses I will give them the information desired. Tell those of the band who are or have been collecting used stamps, not to be disheartened by any letters saying there is no market for them. I have collected over 30,000 stamps since last December. There are reliable parties who buy them.

Miss FLORENCE A. LANGLEY,
West Levant, Penobscot Co., Maine."

Will some one tell us about the "birthday list"? I should think it might be a very nice thing for each "Shut In" to send the date of her birthday and have a "letter party" on that day; perhaps that is what you mean by the list. Suppose we try this plan, and form a sort of COMFORT birthday society for the exchange of letters, etc. Would the friends like that?

COMFORT Cousins:—I will first give my sympathy to the "Shut Ins," as I was a "Shut In" for six months in the spring and summer with spinal trouble.

I have some papers I would like you all to have to read, late "Youth's Companions," "Household Monthly," some Sunday-school papers and my COMFORTS. I would rather send them to "Shut Ins" near my age, eighteen in Jan., then they can send them to others.

GERTBUDE E. SWEET,
Dayton, Yamhill Co., Oregon."

"I have a number of 'Children's Chatterbox Magazines' which I will divide among little 'Shut Ins' if addresses are sent to me.

LOLA BELLS BOATH, Box 1890, New Orleans, La."

Many thanks for these kind offers. I know there will be many who will gladly accept them.

I have a few lines from our friend Mrs. E. Jones.

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For 10 Old Coins. Save all
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Send 2 stamps for illustrated
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THE MAGICIAN.

"I'm very glad to see you, Jane.
I heard you were quite ill—
That medicines were tried in vain
Your malady to kill.
I'm sure I'd greatly like to know
How you got well so soon,
They told me you were very low
Last Sunday afternoon!"



"Why yes, indeed, dear Caroline,
They gave me up for dead;
Night after night no sleep was mine—
I tossed about in bed.
But just when everybody thought
Death soon would supervene,
Some friend of father's kindly brought
That magic food—OXIEN!"

AGAIN IN ITS GRASP.

Tightening its toils, we mean that sneezing, coughing, back-aching malady—that oreo stealthily attacks its victim, bears him down for a time and when confident of recovery takes him from our midst—epidemic influenza or La Grippe.

In this land, as in others, it sneered at the attempts of our scientists and medics to arrest its terrible course.

In a twinkling, old, middle aged and young were seized as victims and struggling in its grasp.



Fully 50 per cent. were destined never to recover. Many families were extinguished entire. Many were torn apart and the few remaining members left with the memories of a once happy home.

Thousands were brought to a bed of suffering for the remainder of their life. Thousands more were left subjects for the mad house.

The heroic endeavor of the medical profession saved many of those who were stricken with La Grippe, but in most of those cases the saving of life was but to prolong the misery, for it is well known that wherever the monster sets its seal, it is sure to leave unfavorable results, but in the past records the dispensor it has been proven that that simple, plain, simple tablet called OXIEN, had a large mission to perform in this one particular, and the well it did its duty is attested by the numerous letters received from our grateful friends. OXIEN probably did more to ward off La Grippe, lessen its suffering, and effect a complete cure than any of the advertised remedies.

The dreaded disease takes a ready hold of the unprepared to withstand its ravages and it is duty you all owe to your friends and relatives, to depend upon the arrival of the first symptom. How shall we do this?

Keep a supply of the food on hand. When you feel a slight cold coming on, look out, it is the warning note. The sneezing, hacking and coughing is the messenger of warning sent you. Commence taking the tablets as directed and you will note very quickly the results. No great bottle of medicine is needed. A supply for the day can be carried in the vest pocket. The busy man's companion and friend. Pleasant, Effective, Inexpensive.

Do not wait until La Grippe has you in bed or on the way to the grave, for the Giant Oxie Co., Augusta, Maine, will send you without charge a sample package if you apply this month, together with new special directions so you can use it as a hot beverage.

MAGNIFIES 500 TIME



Our new powerful, triple, interchangeable microscope, with a mammoth lens, reveals all the mysteries of the heretofore invisible world, perfectly perfected with insect holder and a linter for staining water, droplets, insects, etc. answers for thousand purposes. This elegant polished brass finish gem is an instructor, as well as a great convenience, reading, etc. It has all the contrivances for handling butterflies and other beauties. The top of the instrument can be removed to insert objects for inspection, which include not only seed and grain, but hundreds of other materials, such as insects, bits of cloth, paper, fur, hair, leaves, flowers, stones, ores, etc.; in fact, anything small enough to insert. It is valuable in detecting adulteration in food, such as flour, tea, coffee, sugar, spices and fatal trichina spiralis or pork worm. Agents will find it to be the fastest selling article they have ever handled, its novelty and the wonder it reveals excite the curiosity of the people and they will buy. It sells at sight everywhere. The agent is not considered a bore when shown it, for it interests every one. Each microscope is sent securely packed in a box. Price only 37 cts.; 3 for \$1. They have generally sold for \$1.00 singly, but buying large quantities, we get a low price. Send today and we include a 3 month's trial subscription to COMFORT.

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Can get relief if she will seek
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Mrs. Alice Maple, Oregon, Mo., writes:

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Dolly has a valentine
And now she'd like to know
Which one of all her friends it is
Who seems to love her so.

Cousin Hebe's Reflections.

"TIS LOVE, 'TIS LOVE THAT MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND," and it is only the maid of sixteen who vows she will never leave the old home. Generally she is the first to break this youthful resolution.

It is pleasing to see therefore that mathematical and statistical science, which plays so important a part in the speculative interest of the business world, have at last been exerted in behalf of woman. It remained for an Englishman to make up the table which every girl, who has not taken a vow to remain single, ought to paste on the inside of her parasol. The calculator tells the earliest marrying age to be 15 and makes 100 represent the On this basis, the individual certainty of marriage, chance of any woman at various periods of her life is expressed as follows:

Between 15 and 20 years	11 1/2
Between 20 and 25 years	52
Between 25 and 30 years	18
Between 30 and 35 years	15 1/2
Between 35 and 40 years	3 1/2
Between 40 and 45 years	2 1/2
Between 45 and 50 years	1 1/2
Between 50 and 60 years	1 1/4

Above the age of 60, the chance is only .001, or 1 in 1,000. Of course there may be circumstances which will modify the figures in some cases. Charms of manner or appearance, the possession of marked talents or even wealth may raise the percentage. But the figures represent the grand average; and no woman can hereafter make the excuse that she did not know when the favorable time for action had arrived. What may be expected after the performance of the ceremony may be gleaned from a partial tabulation by Sir Francis Galton. This eminent peer, from an investigation of 200 couples, found that 83 per cent. of wives had good tempers, while only 46 per cent. of their husbands were similarly endowed. Of the husbands, "22 had mild and docile wives, and 24 of them had fretful, violent, and masterful wives. Of 54 bad-tempered men, 32 had good-tempered, and 22 bad-tempered wives. It was also found that 23 per cent. of wives are fretful, 13 per cent. violent, and 6 per cent. masterful. This would seem to indicate that the position of husband is rather more desirable than that of wife.

"It is the fat girl who has the best time," writes Ella Wheeler Wilcox in New York "Truth." "If you have not positive beauty, or the subtle magnetic charm that carries all before it, you merely want to acquire flesh—lots of it, my dear girl—and you will have plenty of admirers. Men like poly-poly women. I know they will raise a howl of denial, but all I ask of you is to watch them. Time and again I have seen girls with beautiful faces acting as wall-flowers. I have never yet seen a wall-flower who had fat shoulders and big arms and hips. I can't endure a fat woman, I heard a man say one day last winter. But that evening I chanced to see him in a ball-room, where there was a great variety of pretty women, all strangers to him. He looked about him with a critical eye, and finally said to me: 'Get me an introduction to the girl in lavender—she is superb.' The girl in lavender was unnoticeable in face and feature—her complexion was dull, her eyes lusterless; but she was sumptuous of form. Cushions of soft, white flesh billowed up over her square-cut corsage, and her arms were like the arms of an overgrown, overfed baby—shapeless, fat, and dimpled. During the evening, five other men came to the hostess, and, in my hearing, asked to be presented to the girl in lavender." A slender, spirituelle girl, famous for her beautiful face, did not receive half the attention bestowed upon the fat girl. Over and over again I have observed the same thing. Say what they will, criticize as they may, men are nevertheless attentive to young women with an over-supply of flesh. I think men have an instinctive feeling that flesh means benevolence, amiability, and repose; at all events, they give the overplump girl a good time. They write poems about slender forms, and they describe their heroines in novels as spirituelle, and they paint pictures of sylphs, but they seek the fat girl's society in real life. They do not become desperately in love with her, perhaps, and they do not all want to marry her; but they like to dance with her, to sit near her, and to keep other men away from her. Therefore, my dear girl, if you want to insure yourself a good social time as you go along, acquire flesh. Your dress-maker will tell you that it is terrible to be stout; she will make you uncomfortable, as only a dress-maker can, in discussing your figure; your lady friends will say your figure is "horrid," "dumpy," "gross," "disgusting." Men will make sarcastic jests about fat people in your presence, but they will be ever at your side to fill your dancing-card, to give you drives, and to pay you all sorts of pleasant attentions. They will be eager to teach you how to swim in the summer, and to waltz with you in the winter. If you wish to have a gay, sociable time as you go along, and never be neglected or left at one side, cultivate fat. Big hips will do more for you than big eyes; a pigeon chest will be better than a fine color; and dimpled elbows and creases in your wrists will prove more fetching for you than classic features."

But we can't all be fat and the percentage of marriages is greater among the ordinarily built girl. There is nothing like sleep and absence from worry to create stoutness.

Speaking the other day, not without a suggestion of professional pride, of the attention bestowed by the newspapers on a recent wedding in high life at Newport, the New York "Sun" commented upon the development of a public interest "in a circle of luxurious society" in this country, whose "dimensions are so small that all of its more prominent members have become in some sort public characters." Thanks to the newspapers, the "Sun" said

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COMFORT.

In the
Cosey
Corner
of the
Editor's
Sanctum



A GROUP of thinkers was once discussing the question as to which of the three men was the most valuable to the community—the man of projects, the man of resources, or the man of imagination. They were unable to reach a conclusion, for said they: The man of projects invents a way to do a thing; the man of resources makes a practical application of the invention, and the man of imagination sings their praises. True, in some few cases all three characters are united in one man, as they were in Robinson Crusoe who devised, executed and applauded. But generally speaking men who devise and execute have no time to sing their own praises, or even to pat themselves on the shoulder. They are busy with the idea that has nested in their mind; and yet they need encouragement, they require applause, they are dependent upon the approbation of their fellow-creatures. In other words, someone must have imagination, or the world will soon come to a standstill. Said the French poet Beranger: "Let me make the songs for a nation and I care not who makes the laws. It was not Farragut's, Sherman's, Sheridan's, or Grant's sword that freed the slaves; rather was it the fervid imaginations of Mrs. Stowe, of Phillips, Garrison and Whittier which made liberty so dear to our people that they were willing to die for it. Without Jefferson's imagination Washington would have striven in vain to free this land from English bondage."

In fact, it is safe to affirm that no brilliant deed was ever wrought, no noble action ever performed until it had first been thought out and fought out in someone's imagination. Imagination discovered the new world long before Columbus set sail from Palos and Patrick Henry pictured in glowing sentences the battles of the Revolution long before George Washington was ready to fight them. The man of imagination is always far in advance of his time. "Westward the course of empire takes its way," sang Bishop Berkeley one hundred years before the foundation of the wonderful city of Chicago, or before the name of California was known to anyone save the learned members of geographical societies. But in singing the praises of the men of imagination, let us not be unmindful of what we owe to the men of action. We celebrate this month the anniversary of the birth of one of the grandest men of action that the world has ever known. He was absolutely devoid of imagination and that made him so valuable to his country. Had he been visionary, he would not have been so trustworthy; could he have wielded his pen as well as he did his sword, he might have been tempted to fight England by proclamation. Grant was also a man without imagination and so was Von Moltke, as France knows to her sorrow. But in our admiration for men of ideas and men of action we should not lose sight of the men of resources, for often in a humble way they accomplish wonders in benefiting their fellow-creatures. Dean Swift was once asked who in his estimation was the man of greatest resources that he had ever known. "That man is a woman," was his reply, "a humble peasant in my service. In peeling my potatoes, she was careful to save the eyes intact for planting and thus raised yearly several bushels for the use of her own family; with the bones from which I had eaten the meat, she daily made a pot of soup for her children; my old stockings she unraveled and with the yarn knit many a pair for her little ones; she raised six of the finest boys I ever set eyes upon, each of whom made a splendid soldier for King George, and while doing all these things and a thousand others of the same nature, she acted as anvil for the two big thumbs, ingests of a drunken husband!"

People who work with their hands are very apt to look upon brain workers as idle folk. When George Stephenson, the inventor of the locomotive and builder of the first railway, would go to bed in the middle of the day his neighbors looked upon him as a lazy man, a sluggard. They couldn't imagine such a thing as a man's going to bed to think! Thinking is not work in some people's eyes, strange to say, and yet there can be no harder work than deep thinking. It arches the back, furrows the brow and dims the eye more quickly than does hewing of wood or drawing of water. Think how hard Archimedes was toiling when as the Roman soldier rushed upon him with drawn sword, he merely called out to him to be careful and not step upon the geometrical figures which he had drawn upon the sand. True, there have been thinkers who were also hand-workers. Elihu Burritt the learned blacksmith pounded his anvil while studying mathematics and languages; Hogg the Ettrick shepherd made verses while tending his employer's sheep, and Arkwright the inventor of the spinning-jenny worked out his ideas while occupied in shaving beards a week old for a ha'penny. To get down to the moral of this train of thought, we would counsel the man of brawn not to sneer lightly at the man of brains. They are both very necessary to the world's progress, and they should both stand shoulder to shoulder for the good of humanity. Hood's "Song of the Shirt" shows how ready the poet is to come to his fellow-creature's assistance, and many and many a blow has the good gray poet Walt Whitman struck on the anvil of his brain in order to forge an idea in defense of the laborer. Honor to genius!

Lackaday, we had nearly forgotten that Saint Valentine was born in this month when the postman laid a tiny envelope on our desk,

most neatly addressed in purple ink. Upon opening it, the following came to view:

Don't say you're old and turn away,
Confide in me most blindly;
Old wine, old books, old friends are best!
You're frosty but you're kindly.
You pass your life among your books
In far too much seclusion;
Just let me in to mix things up
In genial confusion.

I know some things not found in books.
Philosophy is sham, sir.
My name? why yes, I don't object—
Your valentine I am, sir.
So haste and open wide your door
And let me in beside you;
And if I prove not welcome, sir,
I'll never deride you!

To think of such a merry sprite as this in the editorial sanctum! "Genial confusion" indeed! When should we get to press if this merry maiden were permitted to mix live "copy" with "copy" that had been killed; to mingle "standing matter" with new and cover up the hero of the continent story under an "ad" for soap? No, dear child, an editor has no time to be anyone's valentine or let anyone be his. Or more correctly said, his paper should be a distinct and separate valentine, or messenger of affection, sympathy and comfort to every one of his readers. When the beautiful dancer Barberini attempted to exercise her powers of fascination upon Frederick the Great, he closed his eyes and did what few kings have had the strength of mind to do, turned away from her. Prussia needed all his love, all his attention, and he was unwilling to weaken his heart by dividing it. Frederick was a great king and a wise one and COMFORT's editor may well profit by his example.

But, cries someone of our fair readers, you surely do not mean to assert that the brain worker and the hand-worker, the man of thought and the man of action do not stand in need of a woman's affection to cheer and sustain them? By no means, while it may be true as the good book asserts that woman was created for the greater glory of man, yet is it also true that all great men have been more or less dependent upon and inspired by the love of some good woman. This is even true of great warriors. Take Cromwell, Marlborough, Napoleon and Washington. Their devotion to their wives was at all times beautiful as it was praiseworthy. We have the words of Bismarck and Disraeli, that they owe their greatness to their wives. True, Sir Isaac Newton never found time to choose a wife and when upon one occasion he got so far as to take a maiden by the hand he forthwith sank into a fit of abstraction and in his absent-mindedness used one of her dainty fingers to stop his pipe with. We read much concerning the unhappy love of men of genius, but the makers of these books are very careful to omit such names as Addison, Balzac, Scott, Cooper, Longfellow, Tennyson and hosts of others, including Martin



THE COSEY CORNER IN OUR SUBSCRIBERS' HOMES.

Luther, Bismarck, Carlyle, Gladstone, Thiers, Garibaldi, John Stuart Mill, Messonnier, Michelet, Daudet, Howells and Stedman. Genius is no doubt a petulant child and often calls for great forbearance on the part of a wife; and yet as a rule the wives of great geniuses have been their safest critics. Scott stood so in dread of his wife's stern judgment that he often hesitated to read his poems to her, for she rightly held that he was wasting his glorious gifts by writing poetry. No, in spite of the fact that three of the greatest English poets to wit, Shakespeare, Milton and Byron did not live happily with their wives, we are of the opinion that genius far from being hampered by married life has in most cases found not only spiritual and mental comfort but its loftiest inspiration in conjugal love; but we should add that our only warrant in assuming that Shakespeare's affection for his wife was not what it should have been, is the fact that in his last will and testament he bequeathed to her his "second best bed."

But before passing on, suppose we give this subject of marriage a second thought; for woman has been poetically described as the Creator's afterthought, consequently his best thought. Cynics and pessimists always take, it would seem, the keenest pleasure in sneering at marriage. They have called it the "grave of love," the "deathblow to individuality," the "selfish man's refuge," the "sale of personal freedom for a mess of greens," "an auction sale of hearts knocked down to the highest bidder." And a certain comic and satirical journal rendered itself immortal one day by giving the following advice to those about to marry: "Dont!" But take heart, patient angels of the fireside, all the disdain and contumely which the world may heap upon you will drop from your white wings at the last trump like autumn leaves from the fruit tree, making the golden fruit more manifest. Therefore, O

honest young men and earnest young women, go on with your wedding feasts and although there may be no divine guests present to turn the water into wine, yet shall ye find that the love from which selfishness has been wignored hath power and potency to work many a miracle—sweeten toil, lessen sorrow, dull pain, gladden the humblest fireside and add sweetnes to the plainest fare. Like a grab bag at a church fair, the Editor's drawer, when pulled way out is often found to contain some scraps bearing, as the lawyers say, all fours upon the very subject under discussion. Who may be the author of the following is a difficult matter to say, but one thing is quite certain it has never been published before. It is entitled:

PLAIN ADVICE TO THOSE ABOUT TO MARRY.
TO THE MAN.

If you think that a woman is any weaker-minded than a man, stop where you are.

If you have chosen a pretty woman without regard to her other qualities, halt, you are on the wrong road.

If you think that a house should have only one head and that head be yours, postpone your wedding indefinitely.

If you have an idea that you are too good for a picked-up dinner, remain a bachelor.

If you are of the opinion that marriage makes man and wife one and that you are to be that one, send in your regrets, at once.

If you intend to treat yourself any better than you treat your wife, don't take one.

If you have found it a hard task to be happy yourself, don't try to make anyone else happy.

If you suppose that running the house consists in paying the bills, don't undertake it.

If you are one of those men who think that ten per cent of their income belongs to the tap room, in heaven's name let marriage alone.

If you incline to the opinion that any manners are good enough for home manners, don't try to have a home.

If you intend to encourage your wife by telling her that her cake, puddings and pies are not so good as those your mother used to make, don't go any farther; break the engagement.

If you are marrying her for her figure, it would be wise on your part to watch her diet very closely.



TO THE WOMAN.

If you are going to marry a man for his looks, you mustn't be surprised when he gives you black ones.

If you are marrying for money only, you must only expect to get what money can buy.

If you only contemplate taking a husband in order to gain greater freedom, don't be surprised if he should profit by your example.

If you are merely marrying to spite your family, bear in mind that your husband doesn't belong to your family.

If you are going into the thing blindly, don't hold up your hands in holy horror when you get your eyes opened.

If you are marrying a man to reform him, it behooves you to exercise all the zeal and patience of the reformer.

If you have an idea that a cook book and an allowance can make a happy home, you should get yourself to a nunnery with all convenient speed.

If you are extremely fond of dancing, you would do well to marry a dancing master.

If you expect that God will bless your home, because you put that sentiment in yellow worsted and an oak frame, you are doomed to disappointment.

If you don't feel that you are qualified to be a poor man's wife, don't marry a rich one.

If you are fond of dress and show and empty parade and take pleasure in the frivolities of life, don't marry a man at all, merely marry something that will pass for a man.

If you have an idea that married life is any easier than it was in your mother's time, because you can live in a boarding-house and put your washing out, don't try it.

If you have been engaged three times before this, you had better wait six months; perhaps this engagement may be followed by still another.

If you hold the opinion that husbands are like unto anything that you have read in novels, you would do well to inquire into the married life of those who wrote the books.

If you are merely getting married to work out some theories of your own, you would do well to discuss them first with the man upon whom you intend to make the experiments.

If you are going to marry a man out of mere gratitude because he once saved your life, stop and ask yourself whether it is not paying too much for the service.

Here we leave the subject for the time being, promising our readers that that intellectual grab bag, the Editor's Drawer, shall next month, possibly, be searched for some plain advice to those who are almost persuaded to remain single. There is no greater contradiction in terms than the expression "single blessedness." There can be no blessedness in this world save in partnership with our fellow-beings, not necessarily in marriage; it may be in friendship, in Platonic affection, in filial love. Of one thing however you may be assured that love is heaven and heaven is love, and that wealth and honors will prove to be but Dead Sea fruit unless love be there with them.

COMFORT'S MARCH NUMBER

will excel anything that has yet been given to our subscribers. We have many new illustrations and novelties in sketches to favor the readers of this magnetic monthly which is meeting with such popular greetings in all parts of the country. We receive many letters saying how can you give such a nice paper for so little money. Well, it is because we want to get our patrons to feeling that they cannot do without their LITTLE COMFORT, and be willing to renew as each term expires, for they may always be looking for some new and interesting feature to appear, therefore they will feel well paid for the small outlay.



TWO CARDINALS STRICKEN DOWN

The Duke of Clarence Suddenly Taken Off.

Princess Mary Heart-broken Now That Prince Albert is no More.

Funeral Not Wedding Bells.

Great Excitement Through All Europe.

And the United States is also in a fever of excitement over the same trouble that has stirred nearly all the people on this globe. The cause of the sudden taking off of The Great Khedive of Egypt, the mighty cardinals Manning and Simeon, and the soon to be KING OF ENGLAND, Prince Albert, Duke of Clarence, has all come from the same disease, that awful disease "La Grippe" which is sweeping over the world and mowing down its victims by the thousand. It is not confined to High Life, it fastens its fangs into all sorts of human beings. Unless you prepare and fortify yourself against the attacks of this dread monster you, dear reader, as well as everyone else, are liable to receive a visit any day from the scourge. How common is the scene we present here of the poor mother not able to hardy get around herself, yet when the children are so sick in bed she must look after their wants as she is all alone with them. The telegraph columns of daily papers are filled each day with news from all parts of the U. S. telling of this one high up in life's station, that one middle way along or the very poor people who have come down to their grave during the passing by of the last twenty-four hours, and still the work of the slaver goes on. The weak are the first ones to fall victims and they should be ready to ward off the attacks and make them light as possible. It has been found that really the only thing to rely on to assist the weak person through these attacks is Oxien, that great and wonderful food for the Nerves. It comes in tablet form so it can be carried in the vest or dress pocket so to be always handy; it drives out and kills any germs that remain in the system and downs the monster every time. To those who are quite strong or very strong Oxien is a great help to ward off any possibility of the La Grippe getting a foothold. Oxien is now recommended as a hot drink. This excellent beverage is easily prepared by dissolving a tablet in hot water and it thus acts quickly. The



THE POOR MOTHER'S SORROW.

Oxien Porous plasters are the greatest assistant however for they pull while the food is driving, and it is then impossible for disease to gain control. Thousands of people from all parts of the world are sending for this wonderful food and the new plasters to comfort and soothe them in their misery. Any one can get a Free sample of the food to try for themselves by sending to the manufacturers, The Giant Oxie Co., Augusta, Maine, who want to do all the good possible and thus send free to all who write this month, and we recommend every reader of this paper to send to-day, don't wait until you are sick, have it ready in the house, or if you have been sick and don't feel quite as strong as ever be sure and send for some, and all should take advantage of the great offer this month. Some people wonder what The Grip is like, well in the language of one who has had it we will say the first symptom is a general physical collapse. The patient falls all to pieces like a house struck by an earthquake; he tries to speak but finds the voice gone he is so hoarse, your feet increase in weight, each one seems to weigh a ton. Your joints seem packed in coarse gravel; you seem to travel like a top heavy load of hay drawn by an unbroken yoke of steers over new ploughed ground; cannot breath through your nose, and at times even through your mouth, then you breath through your pores which seem to be all closed up; your skull seems to be a kettle to boil your brains in, they are stewed like as a housewife stews dumplings, all the aches of all the aches seem to be focused within you. You suffer all the ills flesh is heir to and all your bones ache besides and this is what you escape if you keep Oxien on hand and take it regularly, for unless prepared it strikes people down as they come from shopping or weddings. The Princess Mary can never see her wedding day with the Prince now and become Queen of England as was to be her probable good fortune had not La Grippe come along and snatched them from her.



THE PRINCESS MARY HEART-BROKEN.



DEAR COMFORT FRIENDS:

How are you getting on with your New Year resolutions, pretty well cracked by this time, are they? Never mind, remember that

"Every day is a new beginning,
Every morn is the world made new,"
and do not be discouraged, but try again. Aim high, even if you do not hit the mark.

I believe I promised to announce another competition for the Essay Club this month. I had intended to have reports from the committees appointed last month, but have been prevented from writing to them, so we shall have to wait another month for those. Remember the yearly assessment of 10c.; all those not renewing before Feb. 1st will have their names dropped from the list. The subject for the next competition will be *The Comparative Ability of the Sexes; Is Man Superior to Woman?* A prize of five dollars will be given for the best essay on this subject; a year's subscription to COMFORT for the second best. Competition expires Apr. 5.

Now for the letters. So many, we are impatiently waiting for theirs to appear; but dear friends, you can have no idea of the immense number which I receive, and for even the best of them there is not room. So you must not feel too much hurt if your own good and interesting letter never gets into print; you may think that Auntie has read it, anyway. Some are still forgetting what I have said so many times about not using a lead pencil, and not writing on both sides of the paper; so they get in the waste-basket without delay. But I am talking too much. It is astonishing how garrulous we old Aunties do get.

"My parents were among the first settlers in this country, and when they first came here, as far as the eye could reach, there was nothing but the level prairie, look which way you might. Over these plains thousands of buffaloes roamed to their own sweet will. The Indians were friendly enough, almost too friendly in fact, for they were not very pleasant neighbors. But that was a good many years ago, too long ago for me to remember much about it. About four years ago I spent a summer in Colorado. I wanted very much to see a cowboy, and I shall never forget the first one I saw. Auntie, he didn't look one bit like I thought he would. He did not look any different from the western citizen in general. Will all the cousins write to me? Should like to hear from the South.

BLOSSOM."

If you want to see a cowboy now, Blossom, we have one among us, and I will "trot him out" for your inspection.

"I want to be a cowboy and with the cowboys stand, A broad brimmed hat upon my head, a rattle in my hand; And here on western plains so wild and so wide, I'd chase the long eared calf and brand the maverick's side.

So, Aunt, you want us to come again and tell more of that free (?) Western life, do you? Well, here I am. I have just returned from a forty-five consecutive days roundup, tired, dirty and hungry. Found awaiting me some very nice letters from the cousins. These I will answer at earliest opportunity. The girls used to say my heart was just like a street car—always room for one more. It was never filled, I presume, because that one never entered. Just so with my correspondence—never so numerous but that one more is welcome. I am not a Darwinian in belief, but when it comes to a continued exchange of letters, then the 'survival of the fittest' is my creed. Aunt, I hope you will not be uneasy that any of your nieces will lead me out—to—well, you said what it was. I was never there myself, but have a dear friend who has suffered and he has given me the minute details as to the way girls write when they are just leading on. If any persist in this game, I presume it is something two can play at. Wis. Wild William bravely makes his statements as to what he will never do. Bravo! now stick to it Bill and maybe some girl will be the happier by your not getting her. Do not consider myself a coward. Like W. W. B., can make pumpkin pie (which I will compare with his) but I always enjoy them better when there is some one to eat them with me. So I would not say what might befall me. The poet says,

"There is a Destiny that shapes our ends rough,
Hew them as we will."

This seems to be prophetic of my case and so while working for the best am resigned for what fate (if such there be) has in store for me. I can see no impropriety in corresponding with strangers. Is it our fault we are such? Do we not know our own feelings and are we prompted by unworthy motives? Why not give others credit for what we are willing to take for ourselves. Discretion of course should be used in all things, and they who are devoid of such should consult with those who are able to advise; and there are no better advisors than our mothers (God bless them). Well, I'm mounted again, but when, where or what shall I commence at? Ah! here is a long eared calf that needs attention, and while I am branding him, will think of a commencing point and write something of Arizona. Best wishes to all.

WILLIAM THAMES, Willcox, Arizona."

Yes, God bless the mothers! If only the girls, and boys too, would not be so impatient to get away from Mother's advice, so prone to consider her "old-fashioned" and "behind the times," there would be fewer wrecks in the young lives around us.

"Mr. Charles Percy De Vere, you deserve a good 'jaw' from every one of Auntie's nieces. Now wouldn't you rather talk than chew tobacco? I'm sure I would, and don't you suppose that in talking one jaw would wear out as fast as the other? while in chewing tobacco—Well, I never took particular notice, but I do not think I ever saw a man who chewed tobacco on both sides of his mouth. As to talking, any one that reads your letters would think you were pretty good talker yourself. Would be pleased to exchange photos with you (may I, Auntie?) Pedagogue, I liked your letter in March COMFORT very much. It is so intelligently written. Can any of the cousins tell me where I can get the story, Our Mary?"

SUNNY CHURCHIL."

Oh yes, Auntie is willing that you should exchange photos. But I shall not let you "come down" too hard on Percy De Vere, for I confess that he is one of my favorite nephews!

"I live in south Texas near the gulf. The climate is delightful and mild except a few northers during winter, but which only last a short time. Our country is mostly level, and the prairies are covered with beautiful wild flowers which form a vast carpet of beauty in spring time. This part of Texas is settling up very rapidly; ranches are being cut up into farms, and many small towns have sprung up as if by magic. I live near one of the oldest settlements in Texas, the old Goliad Mission, which still stands in the midst of a quaint old Mexican town. It played a very prominent part in the Texas war, and was used as a fort. It stands on the bank of the San Antonio river, and overlooks the valley below. There are a great many Mexicans here, and I am learning to speak Spanish from them. I like Librarian's ideas

of unknown correspondence very much, and wish some of the cousins would write to me.

IDA R. WILSON, Berclair, Texas."

"I suppose I like to read as well as anyone in the U. S. I read anything that I can lay my hands on. I read novels, but I say emphatically that it will not do to read them months at a time; it would be ruinous to your mind, your mind would dwell on the exciting, blood-curdling stories, and it would be poisoned against good, solid reading. You could not interest yourself in good books. These blood-curdling stories should be let severely alone. But the above is nothing, when compared to the infernal habit of using tobacco. They use it in this country in every shape, form and manner, men and women, boys and girls. The children use it before they can walk almost. The law should take hold of it. It is a very bad habit, and we should all hit it a lick whenever we can, and get everyone to quit the filthy habit that we possibly can. I am always sorry for

corporation. You are not obliged to wear this cross, but no other cross can be worn as our badge; though a bit of royal purple ribbon is an emblem of membership, and can be had at the same place, so you can wear either one or both; but, if you can afford it, I would advise you to have the cross; it will cost you but thirty cents, and that will make the total cost forty cents. There may be some who cannot afford the cross—I know women who write to me from away off on the frontier, and they really have no money, no paper, no stamps. Nothing has touched me more than to receive letters written by educated women who are hedged in by their present environment so as to make it exceedingly difficult to get money enough requisite to write a letter, and yet they want to join our Order and wear this cross. I speak of this because if it comes to you to give, "In His Name," the little silver cross to one who cannot afford to buy one, I will see that your wishes are carried out.

"I noticed in the June number a letter from a young German of my age, expressing a desire to improve his knowledge of the English language by means of corresponding with the cousins. Now, I should like to improve my knowledge of the German language in like manner, and if Old Germany, as he styles himself, will write to me at my home, I will do my best to oblige him in every possible way. Another thing which pleased me was to learn that our Aunt Minerva was a Christian Endeavorer. I am a member of the Y. P. S. C. E. and accompanied the delegate of my society part way on her trip from Rhode Island to Minneapolis in July. Your nephew in C. E.,

ARTHUR C. ALGER, 110 Brand St., Elmira, N. Y."

Josephine Henninger, Sedgwick, Kans., N. Y." The address of the young man living in Mo. who sent some drawings.

"I wish to express my thanks to all the cousins who sent to me for lace samples. It was impossible to answer all those that had no stamp enclosed, as also to send samples to all that had, as the letters numbered about two hundred. To my knowledge I sent samples to all those that said they were poor, but if I have forgotten any, I will gladly answer them if they will write again with enclosed stamp. I would like to hear from some of the cousins engaged at stenography.

MARY M. SCHONER, North Branch, Sull. Co., N. Y."

Now who can tell of a more curious home than the following letter describes? Please come again, my sailor lassie, and tell us more of your floating life?

"Shall I tell you about my old home, the place where I lived for nearly 11 years? I am pretty sure not one of the cousins ever had such a home, for it was a floating one, in other words, a whale ship. My father was master, and we always went with him. Oh, such a life as it was, and how I did love it in spite of its loneliness! There were so many strange and beautiful things (and creatures) to be seen, yes and places too, for we wandered about a good deal in our search for sperm whales, visiting often the western coast of Australia, and less frequently Tasmania, Java, and many other places whose names you have perhaps never heard.

We went to Norfolk Island twice, you know that is where the descendants of the mutineers of the ship Bounty are living. About once in three or four months we would go into port to get our mail, and a fresh stock of provisions. Some times we would encounter bad storms, and get very much battered, so we would have to go into port for repairs; once or twice we came near going to 'Davy Jones' Locker,' but were always fortunate enough to escape. I dare say you would like to hear about the whales but my pen fails me; they were such enormous monsters, often 75 feet long with a circumference of 30 feet, and often much larger. Occasionally we would have a 'gam,' do you know what that is, my cousins? Well, sometimes two whale ships would be in sight of each other, and then the captain of one would take a boat's crew (six men) and go visiting the other ship, while a crew

from ship No. 2 would go on board of ship No. 1. We would make an all day visit, the ships just as far apart as they could go without losing sight of each other so as to have as great

as a chance to have as great a range of vision as possible. Perhaps sometimes we would raise whales right in the middle of the gam, and then such scampering as there would be for each crew to get back to their own vessel! If by combining forces there seemed to be a better chance of catching the whales, then the ships would 'mate' or in other words, divide the work, and also the oil resulting from the catch. All the talking was of course carried on by flags; you have no idea how much can be said in that way when people know how.

A. L. S., Box 335, Whitman, Mass."

(Correspondents solicited.)

"Seeing a request from you and several of the cousins asking about stamps, I thought I would write to you about them. How many different kinds do you suppose there are in the world? Well, a collector in Europe has over 22,000 varieties. The U. S. has about 1,900 varieties. The rare ones bring high prices. The New Haven 5c. red, 1845, is worth \$50.00 and used at that; many are worth as much. The first one issued by the U. S. was in 1847, 5 and 10c. The 5c. is worth only 25c. used. It is the variety not the age, that counts. The first stamp issued was the 1d red of Great Britain, 1840. The Prince of Wales, Duke of Edinburgh, Czar of Russia, and many other famous people are stamp collectors. On the stamps are men, women, horses, birds, bears, ships, stars and scores of other devices. Mr. T. K. Tapling, M. C., who has died lately, left a collection worth over \$500.00. I wish to correspond with all of the cousins by my name.

EARL McDREW, Young, Tenn."

"I have traveled very nearly across this broad continent of ours in order to meet you all this month, and expect to have a very pleasant visit. I have really traveled all but 600 miles of the distance from ocean to ocean, but have seen no country or climate equal to our Willamette valley. We are a little north of the latitude of Halifax, and last winter we did not have an inch of snow altogether, nor ice thick enough for skating. I want to say a few words regarding collecting. How many of the cousins are there who are not collectors? You can have no idea of the amount of pleasure and profit to be derived from a collection of stamps, coins, relics, minerals or of many other things. There are some things which are collected however, which I hope none of the cousins collect, such as tobacco tags or birds' eggs. Where does the benefit come in, in collecting tags? As to birds' eggs, I am strongly opposed to anything which will tend to destroy our songsters, while I am the deadly enemy of hawks and crows, those two worst enemies (next to man) of our smaller birds. However, this is foreign to my subject. How many collectors are there who read COMFORT who would like to form a club for purposes of exchange and getting acquainted with others in all parts of the country? I would like to have you all write and make suggestions.

W. F. CASE, Box 83, Molalla, Oregon."

Yes, collecting has a fascination for almost every one; I have found that out in my own experience, as my little geological collection grows. It is a very instructive occupation for young people, when carried on in some directions, but I agree with my nephew in his protest against collecting birds' eggs and tobacco tags; the latter is foolish, the former wicked.

"Meadville is a beautiful little city, situated in a valley on the banks of the Cussewago river. It has a population of about 10,000 and is noted for its schools and colleges. At present, there is a great deal of excitement about natural gas, and many people are putting down wells on their premises. It seems to me that Wisconsin Wild Bill is rather hard on the girls. All flocks have their black sheep, and because one girl writes a letter not fit to be read, the rest should not be censured. I have corresponded with many young ladies, whose acquaintance was formed through the columns of papers, and never received one which I would be ashamed to have any one read. Why would it not be a good idea for the cousins to ask questions of general interest, and have a little space given in the columns of the paper for the answers? Am sure we could learn much thereby. Being a printer, must say that COMFORT is a well-printed and ably edited paper, and will prove a blessing wherever sent.

Uncle Josephus' column very nearly fills this want, friend Como? And this letter speaking of your home, reminds me that I have some others in the same line; one from your own State, too.

ARTHUR C. ALGER, 110 Brand St., Elmira, N. Y."

Josephine Henninger, Sedgwick, Kans., N. Y."

The address of the young man living in Mo. who sent some drawings.

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A. L. S., Box 335, Whitman, Mass."

(Correspondents solicited.)

"Star of the South, you are right in saying 'go and burn those yellow backed bits of paper,' but do not condemn the good with the bad. All the life and feelings of young people fascinated by some glowing love romance, is colored and shaped by the books they read. If it is false and weak, they will be false and weak also. Therefore, do not cut off the supply of good literature. How many young men have spent their earnings in the grog shop who should be reading! How many parents who have not spent ten dollars for books, would give thousands to reclaim a son or daughter that has fallen into temptation. I say, parents have the best of books, papers and magazines in your library, though you wear your silk dress or coat a little longer, for nothing will compensate to your family for the absence of books such as Shakespeare and Irving, Thackeray and Dickens. Who will say that Mrs. Stowe's 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' has done no good? This single tale stirred the heart of this nation, while at the moving of her pen, millions of swords and bayonets gleamed in the air, and vast armies fought face to face till liberty was given to man as man. Dixie, if love is an imagination, all man and womankind must at some time of their lives be fools; and why do the fair sex receive the attention of fools? Is domestic love the love for parents, brother and sister also an imagination, or where do you draw the lines? Maggie Wilson, why not warn your sisters of the fast young man and gambler? Those who frequent the saloon, use big sounding oaths, drive fast horses and wear dashy garments? How often we hear from young ladies, 'He is only a little fast.' Young ladies, as life is precious and you value it, take no chances. One in ten you may draw a husband upwards, nine in ten he will draw you down. Wait awhile, many young men of noble character are on the lookout for a good young lady, and your chances are not to be despised of.

A new cousin, PRAIRIE BOY."

Good advice, girl! The young men know what they are talking about when they bid you beware of the fast specimens of their own sex, and you will do well to listen to them.

"I live in the Piedmont section of Va., near the Blue Ridge. This is a good farming country. Society is good. Christians of several denominations including the Primitive Baptists, Missionary Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists and Dunkards or German Baptists. How many of the cousins ever saw a Dunkard love-feast? Cousins, let us rally to the support of the society proposed by Miss Pratt and Mr. Short. Suppose every subscriber to COMFORT would contribute the small sum of ten cents, that would be fifty thousand dollars toward helping the poor.

J. A. BOONE, Hickman, Virginia."

(Correspondents solicited.)

Suppose you should write and tell us about the Dunkard love-feast? These curious religious customs are very interesting to hear about, and instructive as well.

"I am a lad of nineteen and live on a farm, and like farming very well so far. I think Philip S. Walton has given us good advice, and we should not fail to try it. I am sorry to say that I have used those things which P. S. W. has mentioned until about two years ago, but never, never care to use them again. If there are any young gentlemen who have derived any benefit by using liquor, tobacco, profane language, or by gambling and dancing, I would like to hear from them. We may think it is a great pleasure and enjoyment, but I don't think it draws us closer to God our Master. The 12, 13 and 14 chapters of Romans have interested me lately, and those who have not read them yet, please read them. Now, Auntie, maybe we do not all think the same, but I think, if we would spend more of our spare time in reading the Bible that it would give us a great deal more joy and comfort, than corresponding with strange young ladies for fun. Your nephew,

BASHFUL BILLY."

"I agree with Mrs. E. L. and Mrs. Shellenberger, I have been married for three years, and know whereof I speak; any girl that gets married before her majority, will sooner or later rue it. I am very sorry for the 'Shut Ins.' and extend to all my sympathy, as I have spent many years of my life upon a sick bed. While so many are telling of droughts and of floods, verily I can say Central Michigan is highly favored, it was dry last summer, but crops were not a failure and all have enough to eat and wear that have a mind to work for it; those that will not work do not deserve to have, I think, don't you dear Auntie? I cannot see why some ladies fare always railing at the men; it would seem as though they never had brothers, father, husband, nor in fact any one that was near and dear to them except those of the feminine persuasion. Now for my part, I have seen some very good men, as I have traveled through this world, and also some very bad ones. This also I can say of the other sex, and I do think a really bad woman can put the worst man to shame that ever breathed. I have a son and husband; I once had a father and brother, and really, I can't see but they are just as good, kind, loving and considerate as those of the other sex. And if we don't mean it, why certainly stop it, for it is an unwomanly and sounds very much like some school-girls.

THORNS."

"He that will not work, neither shall he eat!" I believe



THE DIFFERENCE.

You say they're all alike?
Perhaps you're right.

Now this one's eyes are wondrous bright;
Her dimpled cheek is pink and round;
Her nose—ahem!—Her head is crowned
With soft brown fuzz. Her mouth's a rose,
She hath two hands and ten wee toes,
She laughs, she crows, she sometimes cries,]
And though she cannot talk she tries.

But then, you say, she's not unique,
That other babies, so to speak,
Are just the same. Ah, well, to me,
This one's as different as can be—
I can't say how—but much incline
To think the difference is,

She's mine!
E. L. SYLVESTER.

sure I appreciate her very much. She is a great help to me with her many good things. Then dinner over and I have a little time to rest, I turn to Aunt Minerva and I am sure I get much comfort from the many good letters and Aunty's kind words. Then sometimes being in a mood to make something new, I turn to fancy work; I think it is splendid. So you see it takes all departments to make it perfect. And the children enjoy so much their corner. It would be a very strange person that couldn't be pleased with COMFORT; it is for old and young, high and low. I wish more of the cousins would give their method of training children and how to get them interested in studies and books. We never should promise a child a thing unless we keep the promise; if we do they are apt to lose faith in us and say, 'oh she only told me so and so for a purpose.' Never repeat things we hear in the presence of a child, as it sets a bad example for tale telling. Children are much more close listeners than they get credit for. We should be very careful if we repeat anything in the presence of a child, to repeat it just as it was. If we get just a little way from the straight story, the child is apt to get in a habit of the same, and that habit will grow with the child until it eventually thinks it no harm to stretch the blanket just a little, for mamma didn't tell it quite like it was. Why don't we all sign our name to our letters instead of leaving it with Aunty? It certainly would make her less trouble. I will just say if I see this in print I will feel much the same as a small boy with his first pants (with pockets in them.)

Mrs. NETTIE ROAKS, Maiven, Mills Co., Iowa."

We are given this beautiful world to may; we be led to strive more and more to emulate the glorious example of our Saviour. Let us see how much good we can accomplish. We have golden opportunities offered us through the columns of this paper. Sometimes I fear we do not sufficiently appreciate the blessings of these opportunities of ministering; so often the greatest help we can give others is love and sympathy. I am but a scholar in the school myself, trying to live the life that Christ would have us live. I am anxious to tell some of the cousins how nice their letters were. Maggie Wilson, yours was simply grand; you are not afraid to speak against intemperance, the greatest of all evils. If there were more like you, there would not be so many broken-hearted wives. Wise Wild Bill, I admire your nerve. You are a true gentleman to come out first of all the young men and say you are a Christian. God bless you. How I wish God had made me such a brother. T. D. Waller, your letter was good, please write again. And oh there are so many others that I enjoyed reading so much. How I should like to meet you all.

LA GRIPPE.

An ache in your back
As you toss in your bed,
An ache in your head
As it would crack—
That's la gripe.

A taste in your mouth
Like a buffalo coat,
A feeling you note
Of lameness and drou—
That's la gripe.

A burning sensation
That makes your eyes weep,
A struggle to keep
Back a vivid oration—
That's la gripe.

"I am a Christian, and oh how I do love to hear and read of others who are also followers of my dear Saviour. It cheers me on and gives me more courage to face the opposition of the world. I can say to Jeanie that I believe the happiest people are those who are living with the approving smile of God resting upon them. I have traveled for four years in missionary work and seen many converted, and did my health permit I would yet be in the field. I am alone, (yet not alone for Jesus is with me) and can say that He is dearer to me than all friends. I live in what is called the Stone City, a flourishing and aggressive city. Should be glad to have the cousins write to me.

W. A. E., 41 Washington St., Joliet, Ill."

"As I have never seen a letter from this place, I am here to ask for admittance in your happy circle of cousins. I will be pleased to give any information about Barbados to any one who will write me, in fact I solicit correspondence with my American cousins. It is one year since I have been taking COMFORT, and I really find it a comfort to look for my paper every month. With kind greetings from this far off place.

I am your nephew, GRO. E. POYER,
P. O. Box 248, Bridgetown, Barbados, W. I."

"I am a tea agent, 21 years old, and a member of the Y. P. S. C. E. Now having made my bow, I should like to shake hands with every one of you, but can't do it you know. What a rumpus Wild Bill did kick up! Got a good talking to in the Oct. No., didn't he? Just what he deserved too. I've met a good many fellows who didn't think much of girls, and all that sort of thing, but those same fellows are so bashful they never get acquainted, and so don't know what they are talking about. People and things are just as you take them. If you growl all the while everyone will look at you cross-eyed, but if you have a pleasant smile and cheery word for persons you meet, you will find a jolly old world and you plumb 'in it.' Buckeye Belle, let us not be afraid to do something or say a word for Jesus. Forget-me-not, you write the kind of letter I like to read, full of good strong common sense. Will some of the Western or Southern cousins write to me. May the Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from another, to meet at last in our home above, is the wish of

WILLIS J. CLARKE, Binghamton, N. Y."

That's it exactly! "People and things are just as you take them." Some one has said that the people we meet are all looking-glasses, just a reflection of ourselves. "You cannot bring the best out of a man unless you believe the best is somewhere in him." The world is truly, in a sense, what we make it, and let us try to make it the very pleasantest, cheeriest place possible, both for ourselves and other people. With best wishes for all,

AUNT MINERVA,
(Care of COMFORT.)

THE GRIP.

A new disease, like a new genius, has to struggle a long time for recognition. Thus, when the now celebrated but justly defeated "grip" first made its appearance a few years ago, it was regarded in many quarters as a huge joke. In fact there were many skeptical enough to doubt its very existence. They declared it was a purely imaginary disease. But these were the people who escaped the disease. Those who chanced to fall its victims knew it was a very real disease, or else that they were possessed of unusually active imaginations.

The grip, like all epidemic diseases, manifests a very unchivalrous tendency to attack people who are already ill. It seldom fastens itself upon an entirely healthy man. It delights to seize upon systems that are already weakened by disease or overwork. It is a germ disease. These germs exist everywhere in the air, while the disease is prevalent, and are breathed alike by the sick and the well. But a system that is strong and vigorous is usually impregnable against their attacks, while the system that is weak is liable to go down before the first assault.

So the way to escape the grip is to keep strong. But how? One lady in Rhode Island writes: "I was fearful that I would have the grip because I was all run down, but I took Oxien according to directions and the dreadful germs did not fasten upon me. I feel that without Oxien the grip would have taken me away."

A bad cold is the open doorway through which this unwelcome guest frequently enters. Keep this doorway closed by an early use of Oxien. It will cure the symptoms easier than it can the disease and with more comfort to you, but if too late to catch the early symptoms, then take it for the disease and you will be pleased, relieved, cured.

IT WAS A SAD MISTAKE.

These words were uttered recently by a gentleman who had the misfortune to break his leg while alighting from a carriage, but a few days before he had allowed his policy to expire in the Provident Fund Accident Society. He actually threw away \$200.00 in cash which he could have had.

Can you afford to be without Accident insurance? It costs only 4 cents per day for The Provident Fund Accident Society to carry you risk. If you want Accident Insurance or want to represent a good Accident Insurance Company, write at once to the Provident Fund Society, 29 Broadway, N. Y.

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2 lbs. of choice Papers and Magazines 18c.—6 lbs. 50c. A. R. GOODSPED, Dwight, Ill.

YOUR NAME on 20 lovely Cards, 1 Patent Fountain Pen complete, 1 Ring, 1 Forget-me-not Album, 400 Album Verses, 2,000 new Jokes, and latest style samples; all 10c. GLOBE CARD CO., BALTIMORE, Md.

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YOUR NAME on 25 Love Cards, 1 Ring, 1 Forget-me-not Album, 400 Album Verses, 2,000 new Jokes, and latest style samples; all 10c. RAY CARD CO., NORTH HAVEN, CONN.

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WATCH Fine Gold plated, Stem wind and set, the very best made. Sent C. O. D. with a Chain at only \$5.50. U. S. WATCH CO., 380 West Van Buren St., Chicago, Ill.

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DR. HALE'S HOUSEHOLD Ointment cures Neuralgia in 5 minutes. A positive Specific for Pneumonia, cures Calcar certain. Worth its weight in Gold. Agents wanted everywhere. Send 2c. for the most wonderful medicine and full particulars. Address KENYON & THOMAS, Sole Proprietors and Mfrs., Adams, N. Y.

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PEARL STEEL PINS, sharp points, black or white. Can't break it. It is made of Pearl Steel. Worth a dozen pieces of common pins. Sample paper by mail to other kind Pins or Needles, 10c. Send 10c. for 25c., 15c. for 50c. Money easily had sending them. Address CHAS. E. MARSHALL, LOCEPORT, N. Y.

CUT THIS OUT! and return to us with Ten Cents in silver, and you will get by return mail A Golden Box of Goods that will bring you in more money in one month than anything else in America. REWARD CARD CO., Box 1531, New York.

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Cured in 10 days. ACTS LIKE MAGIC. Never return. A Boon to sufferers. Remedy MAILED FREE. Address Capital Drug Co., 840, Augusta, Maine.

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LADIES who will do writing for me at their own home will make good wages. Address with self-addressed, stamped envelope, MISS EDNA L. SMYTHE, South Bend, Ind., proprietor of the FAMOUS GLORIA WATER for the complexion.

FREE SEND 4 CENTS IN POSTAGE, a lock of your hair, name, age and sex and I will send you a clairvoyant diagnosis of your disease free. Address DR. C. E. BATDORF, Mechanicsville, Iowa.

Free Ladies Toilet Set of 25 pieces, finished in Gold, Silver and Enamel. If you want one send 15 cts. to pay boxing and shipping. Agents wanted. Ask for Catalogue. KIRTLAND BROS. & CO., 62 Fulton St., New York

SALESMEN WANTED to sell our sample to the wholesale and retail trade. Liberal salary and expenses paid. Permanent position. Money advanced for wages, advertising, etc. For full particulars and reference address CENTENNIAL MFG. CO., CHICAGO, Ill.

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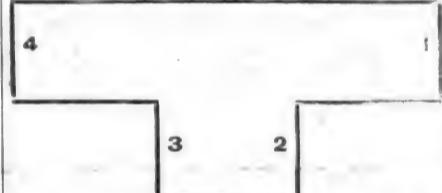


Good-morning, sister Bees! It seems to me that I see a good many vacant chairs to-day; what is the meaning of that? Perhaps some stayed at home because we are going to knit at this session; but they will be very sorry when they know what pretty things we have learned to make.

Did you all bring your needles? Cousin Drone, just hand me that long box from the upper closet shelf—(whisper it, Bees, but an old corset box is just the nicest thing to keep knitting needles in) and we will soon have all provided with the necessary weapons. Excuse me, Sister Kate, but what were you going to say?

"Can some one tell me how to make a hug-me-tight?" Cousin Lou had one given her at Christmas, and we have vainly tried to study out how it is done. They are such comfortable and convenient things."

"Yes indeed they are," says Prairie Rose, "and I can tell you just how, for I made two this very winter. Are there any wooden needles in the box, Busy Bee? we want a pair about the size of a small lead pencil. To make one like mine, take about two skeins of Germantown, or four balls of Dorcas knitting yarn. Cast on 58 stitches; knit across and back, garter stitch, until you have 58 ridges. Then cast on 58 stitches more, knit 58 ridges with these 116 stitches. Bind off (loosely) 58 stitches, and knit 58 ridges with the 58 stitches remaining. Bind off, and you will have a piece in this shape:



Join the edges numbered 1 and 2 together, and those numbered 3 and 4, by sewing loosely with the yarn. Crochet scallops around the neck and arm-holes, and tie with ribbons in front. These are very warm, and convenient to wear under a shawl or jacket."

"I like these practical patterns," says Mrs. E. B. L., and if the Bees would like, I will teach them to make

SEWING WORK WRISTLETS.

Use two shades if you wish of single zephyr, it takes from 1 to 1 and 1-2 ounces for a pair.

Cast on with the worsted double (in double stitches) 27 on two needles, 18 on the third; 9 stitches form 1 shell, 8 shells the usual size for a lady's wrist, 9 for a gentleman's (unless very large wrist), do not knit around plain, but with a single thread seam 2, knit 1, widen by throwing over thread, narrow, continue thus around the wristlet.

2d row.—Seam 2, knit 2 (that includes the loop made by widening), widen, knit 3, narrow.

3d row.—Seam 2, knit 3, widen, knit 2, narrow, etc.

4th row.—Seam 1, knit 4, widen, knit 1, narrow, etc.

Fifth and last row.—Seam 2, knit 5, widen, narrow; this forms one row of shells, then set in another shade of worsted if you like and begin at the first row, bind off on the last row of shells at the last row, (be sure and not knit plain), but seam, knit, narrow, as usual, binding each stitch over the last. When you knit the first time around, take the stitches double, making 72.

"You are right, Sister Bee," remarks Mrs. H., "I just want to say right here how much I enjoy our talks, and I consider Maggie May's practical directions for combination suit which she gave us not long ago, well worth the price of COMFORT for a year. To be sure, I shall not be able to try them this winter, for it would be summer before I could get them done; but they will be just the thing when I get a taste of the shivers next year. Now don't you want to put up your knitting a few minutes, and let me tell you about some pretty things that you can make? It is too late for Christmas, I know, but there are always birthdays coming, and an idea for a pretty little present never comes amiss.

For such of you as have picked up flowers and leaves in your midsummer rambles and put them away in books, the following is very nice. Take half a dozen sheets of heavy cream laid note paper unruled, and mount flowers and leaves on them very neatly with slips of gummed paper, arrange in plants on one side of the page only. When your half dozen sheets have 2 arrangements each all mounted, write the names, date of gathering and place of gathering at foot of page. Now, get some water color paper and make covers; then with a punch make holes at the back of the little book and lace with cord or narrow ribbon. As a finishing touch, take gold paint and make a straggly vine on the cover, and put 'Bits of Wisconsin Woods' on it in quaint letters. When done you have a very pretty present for a friend who lives in some other State, only substitute the name of whatever State the leaves are gathered in in place of Wisc. on cover.

Very pretty pen wipers are made by taking blue and gold plush and making tiny jockey caps, putting some bits of kid or chamois skin inside to wipe the pen on. Very nice for a school girl or boy.

For an invalid friend get some clean white sand and make a good sized bag of strong cloth. Fill partly with the sand and sew up. Make a bright woolen cover, and your invalid will pay you a grateful tribute every time it is heated to place to her aching side or cold feet.

The old lady who has such trouble keeping her door open at the right angle, will find a

brick neatly covered with bright cloth, with a ribbon to lift it by, very handy. Also a case for her knitting needles and darning needles. Just make a square of some suitable material and line. Make pockets for the knitting needles and leaves for the darning needles, fold and tie with ribbons sewn at the edge.

The noisy small boy will like a pair of lines, knit garter stitch, with straps to go over the shoulders, and plenty of bells.

These all have one good point, they are inexpensive and if you are all situated like me, it will be the principal point."

"Some one was asking for a knitted stripe for a bed spread, was it you, Queen Bee?" asks Mrs. L. W. Palmer. "I have a very pretty one, and also a simple edging, which I will teach the Bees if they would like.

STRIP FOR KNITTED SPREAD.

Cast on 21 stitches. Knit across plain.

1st row.—K 3, p 7, k 1, p 7, k 3.

2d.—K 4, o, k 5, o, slip 1, n, pass slip stitch over, o, k 4, o, k 4.

3d.—K 3, p 17, k 3.

4th.—K 4, o, k 1, n, p 1, n, k 1, o, p 1, o, k 1, n, p 1, n, k 1, o, k 4.

5th.—K 3, p 4, k 1, p 3, k 1, p 4, k 3.

6th.—K 4, o, k 1, n, p 1, n, k 1, p 1, k 1, n, p 1, n, k 1, o, k 4.

7th.—K 3, p 4, k 1, p 2, k 1, p 4, k 3.

8th.—K 4, o, k 1, o, n, p 1, n, p 1, n, p 1, n, o, k 1, o, k 4.

9th.—K 3, p 5, k 1, p 1, k 1, p 1, k 1, p 5, k 8.

10th.—K 4, o, k 3, o, slip 1, n, pass slip stitch over, p 1, slip 1, n, pass slip stitch over, o, k 3, o, k 4, repeat.

PEARL EDGE LACE.

Cast on 14 stitches, knit across plain.

1st row.—O, k 1, o, k 2, n twice, k 2, o, n, o, n, k 1.

2d, 4th, 6th and 8th rows.—Purled.

3d.—O, k 3, o, k 1, n twice, k 1, o, n, o, n, k 1.

5th.—O, k 5, o, n twice, o, n, o, n, k 1.

7th.—O, k 3, n, k 2, o, n, o, n, o, n, k 1.

Repeat from 1st row.

"I am so glad to get that bedspread pattern! I have been wanting it for a long time," exclaims Mrs. Lane.

"Nobody has said anything about tidies," remarks Nellie from her rocker, "but if any one wants to learn how to make a

PRETTY WORSTED TIDY just come over here.

This tidy is knit in stripes. It requires 2 coarse steel needles, 2 skeins of garnet Germantown yarn and 1 and 1-2 skeins of old gold.

Cast on 22 stitches, knit across plain, purl back and so on, until you have knit across 10 times. Now just reverse this and knit 10 times the same as before. This makes it in rows across the stripe, one row plain, the other purled and so on until you have the length you want your tidy. Then bind off 6 stitches, drop 2, bind off 6, drop 2, and bind off the last 6. Now ravel the stitches dropped to the end of the stripe. You want 3 stripes of garnet and 2 of old gold. Crochet them together and fringe the edges. This makes a very pretty tidy and anyone who can knit the heel of a stocking can knit it without any trouble. When you crochet the stripes to have the plain row come opposite the purl. This is easily done, as there is no right nor wrong side. Now please try this little edging.

WHEAT EAR EDGE.

Cast on 5 stitches, knit across plain.

1st row.—Knit 2, thread over, knit 1, thread over twice, seam 2 together.

2d.—Thread over twice, seam 2 together, knit 4.

3d.—K 3, thread over, k 1, thread over twice, seam 2 together.

4th.—Thread over twice, seam 2 together, k 5.

5th.—K 4, thread over, k 1, thread over twice, seam 2 together.

6th.—Thread over twice, seam 2 together, k 6.

7th.—K 6, thread over twice, seam 2 together.

8th.—Thread over twice, seam 5 together, k 8.

Repeat from 1st row.

Good-bye, sister Bees! Next time we will have over so many pretty things to talk about, I hope. Address all letters for this column to

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a handsome **TOILET CASE**, it contains over 230 useful articles retailing at 90 cents. WE WANT AGENTS, and to advertise will send this Toilet Case and contents to any address for \$25. DO YOU KNOW that agents make \$5 a day in our business as easily as you can make \$1 in other business? C. Monroe Mfg. Co. Box 95, Rochester, N. Y.

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T HIS is the anniversary month of my return to my accustomed place in COMFORT, after an absence of several months, and to say that we have had a pleasant and profitable year together, one which I am certain on my part has been delightful is certainly the case. I can look back at each month's work with you, and feel that I should be sorry to have missed one of the twelve meetings which we have had.

I receive daily many letters from the young folks asking me to make our talks more in the conversational style and this month we will try that plan, and I want to hear from all those who have made the request as to how they are pleased with the change. This month then no names or addresses will be used, and each one while reading our department will come upon the answer to his or her questions in some cases unexpectedly. And that leads me to say that quite a number of answers have been received as to the best means of stopping the squeaking in shoe soles, which is caused by the rubbing together of two layers of the same, and my idea is that the most practical way named is to have your shoemaker put in a few pegs of wood around over the surface of the sole which will prevent this friction and the very unpleasant noise accompanying the same, especially when going up the aisle of a church a few minutes late on Sunday morning, as you well know this attracts the attention of all present, and in this connection I must say a few words in regard to making ourselves attractive to others. We must in every way especially by our gentle manners endeavor to make ourselves so pleasing in the sight of our friends that they will always be glad to have us in their presence. An old saying and a good one is "Children should be seen and not heard," as was the case a short time ago. Your Aunt and Uncle were invited out to dinner, and there lives at the home of our friends a little girl who is about ten years old, and a young lady about seventeen, and it was a surprise to both of us to see the beautiful behavior of the younger child, and the very annoying actions and rude manners of the older one. Little Edith used all the pleasant little mannerisms so refreshing to see in young people, while Clara seemed to endeavor to make herself disagreeable, and I for one think she succeeded.

As an example, when asked by her mother to go to the dining-room for some fruit, she almost angrily retorted, "I don't want to be a servant, why don't you get it yourself?" How many of my nieces or nephews would have answered MOTHER in that way, for who will you ever find on this broad earth to fill her place? Those ministrations such as can only come from one hand save that of an angel, are not sufficiently appreciated until too late. We can never have but one MOTHER, and we should exert ourselves to strew roses in her path rather than thistles, brushing away the clouds from her sky, and make her life one of sunshine rather than shadow, and in our contact with the outer world, we will find the road much easier to travel, and life's burden much lighter to bear on account of this manner of conducting ourselves. I must try to impress the necessity of adding to your store of knowledge each day, I do not mean that a college education is one of the requisites for a young man or woman, for either may leave school full of honors; they may have the history of the Greeks and Romans at their tongues end, but their education is not complete unless the history of our own time is equally well mastered. What help or pleasure to be able to name all the battles which took place between the Athenians and Spartans, during the Peloponnesian War; or the leaders of many of the Roman conquests, and not be able to tell who commanded the American and English troops at Ticonderoga or Lundy's Lane, or who was the first American General to cross the Rocky Mountains, or the date of the departure of Sherman on his march to the sea. Learn to converse of our own times, on the great achievements of our nineteenth century, and in that way make yourselves entertaining, and your conversation agreeable to those who have been less fortunate in the advantages of a classical education.

Have due respect for the poor although you may be rich yourself, remembering that the wheel of time continually revolves and you may be at the bottom some day yourself. And pay as you buy, not going on the theory that owing a debt will be an incentive to more diligent application and greater exertions to earn money to pay it with, for we are apt to think when we have the money on hand that we will spend that for some seemingly needed article, and let our friend who has given us the accommodation, wait a little longer for his money. Never get into arguments with your friends, which are liable to lead to quarrels and unpleasant feelings, but remember always that many persons are like the old Negro who said he "liked to get into a squabble for the sake of Argy," but always when in a company and good principles are being discussed, strenuously maintain them. And by all means never shirk any duty however hard a task it may seem to perform it, and you will have nothing to fear either in this world or the world to come. And I would advise you if you have always leaned on your Father's purse as a support, do it no longer; brace up, earn for yourselves a competence and a reputation which shall ever be a shining star to which you can look and not hesitate to press on in the same direction, as was the case with many of our great men in the past one hundred years, and the old maxim "If at first you don't succeed try, try again" is applicable here. If you take a step toward being a writer do not be baffled and discouraged and driven out of the race because some modern Daniel shall sit as judge of your manuscript and write unavailable across its fair face. Present it to some other publisher, and follow the round, and if your work has merit it will at last find a place, Daniel De Foe presented the manuscript of "Robinson Crusoe" to nearly every book publisher in London, and it was declined, but at last one more daring than the rest gave it to the world thereby making a fortune of \$100,000 out of its sale, and also improving the fame of its author. If you toward the work of

a shorthand writer, do not allow any obstacle, however insurmountable it may seem, to change your course, press steadily and studiously on, and Success, that most charming of Goddesses, will meet you halfway up the hill, and will give you a helping hand at every upward step. She is waiting to assist you and your own endeavors will decide how much help she will give you.

According to promise I will now make known the nature of the CONTEST for this month, and for the best answers to the same which shall reach my hands on or before the first day of April, 1892, I will award one of the beautiful new and attractive photograph cameras post paid, which are advertised in January issue of COMFORT. As I said when I first mentioned this contest, all are eligible if subscribers to COMFORT, and I will be pleased to have thousands of letters. Now one and all get out your geography's and write me your choice of a "Route around the World." Take the date of February 1st, 1892, and leave New York at 12 o'clock noon, giving me the lines of steamships and railroads over which you would travel to make the trip, and the number of days required, as also the probable cost of the whole trip, closing with the hour of arrival in New York on the return. Could there be any more pleasant manner in which to pass one of these long winter evenings and certainly a very instructive pastime. Let me hear from you early and the decision shall appear with the copy of the best or Prize letter in the May number of COMFORT. Make the trial for the prize even though you do not win it, for it will help you to burnish up some of the countries of the old world in your memory, and if you do win it will give you an article which will afford you many hours of pleasure in the delightful summer days so soon to come, and you can undoubtedly with your camera for a sample sell a large number of them, thereby making a good profit.

Here I present a picture of little Polly who is sitting before me on the cricket with her brother



POLLY'S PICTURE.
They tell me this is Polly;
Well, well—I do declare!
It does resemble Polly's eyes
And here's her curly hair.

The nose is shaped a little bit
Like Polly's, I confess;
And just as sure as anything
This looks like Polly's dress.

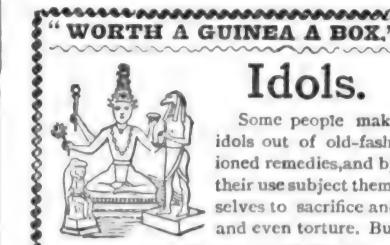
But after all it can't be true,
(Unless the child is ill.)

For who, I pray thee, ever saw
Our Polly sitting still?

I have ascertained from the Editor that back numbers of COMFORT can be supplied by Morse & Co. the publishers, as far as March number 1891. The issue for several months before that was entirely exhausted. The beautiful and intensely interesting story, "Which was Which," began in the April number 1891, and if you desire the complete story send 25c. to Morse & Co. and they will send you all the numbers containing this remarkable record of travel in foreign lands, and you can cut it out of the papers and paste it in your scrap books, thereby securing the complete story almost the same as in book form. And now all those who do not keep a scrap book, my advice is, begin at once, and into it paste every item which you feel now will afford you pleasure or amusement in after years. A book of this kind begun by my mother many years ago, is a continual fountain of pleasure to me now.

A few words here as to valentines. Don't be silly with them. Don't spit out your personal spite with one of them, as there is nothing as low as an anonymous letter except a comic valentine, do not lower yourself in your own estimation to the extent of sending one of these cruel shafts in the dark. Be a man or woman and if you have had a misunderstanding with anyone, go to them kindly and ask or give an explanation and see for once how much more noble you will feel when you meet that person ever afterward. The custom of sending nice valentines is growing and I am glad to see it and will mention in this connection that Morse & Co., Augusta, Me., make an offer of a magnificent lot of valentines in another column of this issue of COMFORT and you will all do well to send for an assorted lot. And now again calling your attention to the "Round the World" contest, and making the request of one and all to enter the list, trusting that all have had a prosperous and pleasant winter, and that each one will take up life's outside cares with renewed vigor upon the opening of the beautiful spring so close at hand. I will ask you to continue your intimacy with this department through the mail and remain your loving,

UNCLE JOSEPHUS, (Care of COMFORT.)



Idols.

Some people make idols out of old-fashioned remedies, and by their use subject themselves to sacrifice and even torture. But

BEECHAM'S PILLS

are praised all over the world as they are a painless and effectual remedy for all Bilious Disorders arising from Weak Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Constipation, Disordered Liver, and Sick Headache. They have no equal.

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If you will get a friend to send with you, I will promptly send each of you a package of nice white envelopes free.

[This firm is reliable and will do as they agree.—Ed. X.]

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Easily made by salesmen selling our Patent Non-Evaporating, Non-Freezing Chemical Fire Pails. Big demand for these goods. No experience necessary. Sold only through Agents, to whom exclusive territory is given. We can prove above statement if you will address THE WORCESTER FIRE APPLIANCE CO., (Incorporated), WORCESTER, MASS.

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FOR THE SURE AND SECRET CURE OF THE ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO CURSE. Tasteless, Harmless and Certain. Prescription sent FREE to wives or friends of inebriates, or Tobacco users. A marvelous success in even advanced cases. Inclose stamp. Can be given secretly in coffee, etc.

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COMPLETE, 4 pieces, rubber type, typewriter, bottle Ink, Ink Pad and Tweezers. Price 15¢ in post box with directions for use. Satisfaction guaranteed. Worth 50¢. Best Lines Marker, Card Printer, etc. Beta name a'm 1 minute, prints 500 cards an hour. Best postage 15¢; 2 for 25¢, 3 for 35¢, etc.

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CUT OUT THIS ADVERTISEMENT and return mail with 10cts. in silver, and we shall send by return mail A GOLDEN BOX OF GOLD that will bring you in more money than man or woman in the world. Absolute certainty, suitable for either sex, and no capital required. OUR GRAND OFFER: We will send by express, fully packed and ABSOLUTELY FREE, one of our handsome \$15 Watches, illustrated above, to the first one hundred persons who cut out the advertisement and return it to us with 25 cents for 3 Golden Boxes of Gold; also a large illustrated catalogue of Watches, Jewelry, etc. We propose to give away these valuable watches merely to advertise our goods. This is no humbug, but a bona-fide offer made by a thoroughly reliable house to the readers of this paper, and entire satisfaction is guaranteed. Address all orders plainly to W. S. SIMPSON, 87 College Place, New York.

AN ASTONISHING OFFER



This beautiful miniature UPHOLSTERED PARLOR SET of three pieces (for the next 60 days) will be sent to any address on receipt of 95 cents in postage, packing, advertising, etc. This is done as an advertisement and we shall expect every one getting a set to tell their friends who see it where they got it and to recommend our house to them. This beautiful set consists of one sofa and two chairs. They are made of fine iron and metal frames, beautifully finished and decorated, and upholstered in the finest manner with beautiful plush (which we furnish in any color desired). To advertise our house, for 60 days, we propose to furnish these sets on receipt of 95 cents. Postage stamp taken. Additional postage for boxing or shipping, order immediately. No postage to letters unless they contain 95 cents.

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We have a thousand genuine, voluntary testimonials of completed cures. We want a thousand more in the next three months from persons whom we are willing to cure. Will you give us a testimonial if we cure you completely?

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will positively cure Kidney or Liver Diseases, and Blood Disorders. Will cure Rheumatism, Inflammation, Diarrhea, Loss of Appetite, Chronic Back Ache, Painful Stomach Troubles, Diarrhea and Flux, and all Bowel Disorders, Pains in the Side, Nervousness, Nervous Debility, Frequent Urination, and troubles peculiar to women. If you have any of these afflictions The Indian Herb and Electric Pad will speedily remove them. Do not neglect your health. Send us your name and address once. Do not delay.

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Nasal catarrh can be easily, quickly, pleasantly and lastingly cured, providing one knows how. I do know how, can do it, and guarantee just such a cure. MY HEALING CATARRH POWDER (perfectly soluble) will positively cure in a few days any ordinary case, not complicated with scrofula. There is no humbug and no disappointment about it. I know what I am talking about, and what I say is the TRUTH. It is perfectly harmless, safe and pleasant to use, clears the head, purifies, heals, stops and cures every discharge from the nose. A package, enough to last two weeks, and more than enough to cure nearly every case, sent post-paid for only 25 cents, or five for \$1.00, by GEO. N. STODDARD, 1226 Niagara St., BUFFALO, N.Y. Have been in drug business in Buffalo over 25 years. Beware of Frauds who copy this adv. Mention paper.

FREE **THE NEW AMERICAN MUSICAL MUSIC BOX** **WILL PLAY 100 TUNES**
HEIGHT 14 IN. LENGTH 19 IN. WIDTH 6 IN. WEIGHT 30 LBS.
To introduce them, one in every County or town furnished reliable persons (either sex) who will promise to show it. Exclusive Music Box Co., Box 212, N.Y. City.

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WANTED—Salesmen; who can easily make twenty-five to seventy-five dollars per week, selling the Celebrated "Pinless Clothes Line," or the Famous "Macomber Fountain Ink Eraser"—Patents recently issued. Sold ONLY by salesmen, to whom we give Exclusive Territory. The Pinless Clothes Line is the only line ever invented that holds clothes without pins—a perfect success. The Macomber Fountain Ink Eraser is entirely new; will erase ink instantly, and is king of all. On receipt of 50¢ will mail you sample of either, or sample of both for \$1, with circulars, price-lists and terms. Secure your territory at once. Address THE PINLESS CLOTHES LINE CO., No. 121 Hermon St., Worcester, Mass.

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Any Lady Can now Learn to Cut Perfect-Fitting Dresses. Protected by Pat. 1879-1885. " 1885-1890. No one using a Chart or Square can compete with The McDowell Garment Drafting Machine in Cutting Stylish, Graceful and Perfect-Fitting Garments. Easy to Learn, Rapid to Use, Fits any Form, Follows every Fashion. An invention as Useful as the Sewing Machine. Free 30 days to test at your own home. Send for illustrated Circular. The McDowell Co., 6 West 14th Street, New York City. Send 35 cts. for copy of our elegant FRENCH BOOKS, explaining how to cut latest style garment.



MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS:

Let me see, this is the month when George Washington was born, isn't it? Now don't be afraid, I am not going to tell that old hatchet story, so you need not be getting out your chestnut bells. I was only wondering, suppose some of my boys here were placed in just such a difficult and important position as George Washington found himself, would they be as faithful to their duty? There is one thing sure; no one can be faithful in great things, who has not been faithful to all the little duties which come to him right along every day. Remember that, my boys who mean to be President some day!

Then there was something else about George Washington which was more noble than his statesmanship, more rare than his military genius; he loved, respected and obeyed his mother. When a man grows, he bowed in deference to her wishes always, and never failed to treat her with the utmost respect and affection. Remember that too, boys and girls who think you are getting too old to do what mother says. You may not believe it, but it's true nevertheless, that "a boy's best friend is his mother," and she doesn't come far from being a girl's best friend, either. Some of you realize that now, and the rest will come to the knowledge some time, perhaps too late.

And this month you send valentines, too. I hope that I shall not hear of any of my boys and girls sending a comic (?) valentine, and especially to his teacher, same as I saw them doing last season, as our artist has sketched below.

Now I have preached enough for once; and we will have the letters. I am going to hear from the little folks first this time.

Dear Aunt Minerva:—I am a little girl about 11 years old. I have a tame chicken named Hiram. We had just got one of our stoops painted brown, and as Hiram was in the habit of coming in the house, that day he walked in across the stoop and left the prints of his feet. We live about a rod from the woods, and one time we went to feed the chickens, and a chipmunk came out and ate some corn with the hens.

Your niece, ESTELLA MCCLAIR.

You did not tell me what State you live in, Estella, so I could not ask the girls to write to you as you wished. Next time don't forget your address, will you?



SELECTING A VALENTINE FOR THE TEACHER.

Dear Auntie:—I hope you will accept me as one of your nieces. I am a little girl 7 years old. My mama has been taking COMFORT for 2 years and she says she could not get along without it. She did not know how she would pay for it last fall when the paper was due, so my little brother and myself gathered chestnuts and sold them and gave mama the money so she could renew the paper. Don't you think that was wise? We are very poor. I have a good, kind, hard-working father whom I love dearly, 2 brothers and 2 little sisters. When mama was sick I did all the work. I can wash, iron, sweep, scrub and wash dishes. I wish some of the little cousins would send me some pretty picture cards, and you too Aunty, please don't forget me. May God bless and keep you in good health is the sincere wish of your poor little niece.

MARY GRANTZ, Milltown, Crawford Co., Ind.

I think you and your brother were very smart little folks, to get the money for your mama to take COMFORT. She ought to enjoy it very much.

"I am a little girl 10 years old and I live in the Salt River Valley 7 miles from Phoenix. This is a beautiful place to live; we do not have any snow here, but our eyes feast on lovely flowers all the year round; it is like lovely spring all winter. All kinds of fruits grow here. We have nice orange trees in our yard; and they raise large quantities of wheat and barley here too."

ZADA HILL, Phoenix, Arizona.

Dear Auntie:—I am a little girl 11 years old. I walk one mile and a half to school. Never missed a day or was late a morning, the last term of 3 months. We live a mile from Otter Tail City, or which was once a city, but now only one family live there; they keep a hotel and the P. O. there. They live on the stage line between Perham and Battle Lake, 15 miles from each place.

Your new niece,

SADIE FRANCIS, Otter Tail Co., Minn.

Dear Auntie:—As mama is writing, I thought I would write too and tell you what I have for pets. I have 2 little calves; their names are Mike and Johnny. I can drive them now. I have a dog whose name is Coolie. He will stay at the sugar-house all day to get sugar to eat; he doesn't eat much but sweet stuff. I live close by the lake; we have nice times in winter, skating and sliding. Last winter we had 108 days of good sleighing. I went to school 20 weeks, and walked 3 miles most of the time; can any of the cousins beat that? I was 11 years old last August.

CARLOS D. WILSON, West Fairlee, Vt.

Well done, Carlos! I am sure you and Sadie Francis must like to go to school, or you would not walk so far. So your dog eats sugar. I have a cat who will eat molasses candy; what do you think of that?

Now the older boys and girls must have their turn.

"I am 13 years old and go to the public school. Marseilles is a quiet little village on the Illinois river. There are high bluffs on the north and south sides of the river. There are only 3 schools, and the public school to which I go is on a beautiful bluff

which overlooks the river. There are 5 rooms in this school and I am in the fourth. I am piecing a crazy patch quilt, and a calico one called the Beggars quilt, but I don't succeed very well. Mama tells me I will never accomplish anything unless I finish one thing at a time.

LUELLA M. HARDER, Marseilles, Ills."

Yes, Mary, you know I think that you are right. Always go to your mother with everything, and never allow your confidence in her to be broken in the least.

Dear Aunt Minerva:—I wish to join with the other cousins in writing about our homes, pets, etc. I had better tell you first that I live on a farm in the northern part of Iowa, on the beautiful banks of Beaver Creek, about 1 1/2 miles from the village of Plymouth. I am 12 years old. My brother and I walk to school every day. When I come home from school, I help do the chores. We have 6 horses, 6 cows, 2 calves and 24 hogs, about 100 chickens and 55 acres of land. We have only lived on the farm 5 years. There are lots of rabbits around here. We mostly raise corn and potatoes, and we also raise large watermelons that weigh 37 lbs. I have to hoe in the garden.

Your new nephew, OSCAR W. WALLROFF, Plymouth, Iowa.

Dear Aunt:—I will try and write you and the cousins another letter. I wrote one sometime ago but never saw it in print. Mother and I are lonesome since father died. I live in Ark., not a very pretty country. I saw in COMFORT that you invite all older boys and girls to write. I reckon you would let me in, as I am just 18. I am not a boy, though. I wish some of the cousins were here to go with me to sing. We have right good singing once a month. Some of you Tenn. cousins come over some Sunday and enjoy it, too. I would like to correspond with any of the cousins. I will answer all letters and tell you all about this rough part of Ark. Aunt, come some day and stay all day and eat fried chicken and garden stuff with us; wouldn't you like it? Hoping to hear from all the cousins I am as ever.

Your new niece, JOHNNIE FOET, Convenience, Ark.

Thank you for the invitation, Johnnie. When I start out on my pilgrimage among my nieces and nephews I shall certainly stop to see you, and hope that fried chicken will be "on deck." You must tell

me what is the best time of year to come. Good-bye, love and best wishes to all from AUNT MINERVA, (Care of COMFORT.)

Now that the terrible grip is so prevalent, you must keep your system fortified against its attacks by the use of Oxien.

LADY AGENTS CLEAR \$10 PER DAY selling my garments for ladies & children Mrs. L. E. SINGLETON, Box 665, Chicago, Ill.

RETOUCHERS Of Photo - Negatives earn \$15 to \$40 per week and are in big demand. Easily learned. Salary paid while practicing and positions found. Catge free. Address, SCHOOL OF RETOUCHING, Oberlin, O.

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A perfect and practical Typo Writing machine for only ONE DOLLAR. Exactly like cut regular Remington type; does the same quantity of work as a foot cap sheet. Complete with paper holder, removable type, self-correcting wheel & a self-inking cap sheet. Size 3x10 inches; weight 12 oz. Satisfaction guaranteed. Circles free; AGENTS WANTED. Sent by express for \$1.00; by mail, 15c extra for postage. E.H. INGERSOLL & Bro. 65 Cortlandt St. N.Y. City.

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NO CURE, NO PAY. When cured it costs you \$8.00 or you can work a few hours and it will cost you nothing. Send 2¢ stamp. HAYDEN CO., No. Windham, Me.

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A SOLID GOLD WATCH SENT FREE TO EXAMINE. Wear and after examination. We are determined to introduce our fine Solid Gold and Gold Filled Watches in every State, and to do it we make a leader of the very best Solid Gold Watch we have in our store. We believe that every intelligent person who wears a watch will take advantage of our Wonderful offer and honestly endeavor to secure us other customers. This watch is warranted to be a Solid Gold Elgin or Waltham, (as written guarantee is sent with every watch). The Cases are Stem Wind and Set. Hunting Style. Solid Gold through and through, and engraved in the most beautiful design imaginable. We warrant them equal if not superior in appearance to any watch you ever saw. The movement is such as you would want in a fine solid gold case, full plate, expansion balance, quick train, richly jeweled Elgin or Waltham, accurately regulated and adjusted and warranted ten years. A solid gold Elgin or Waltham watch was never advertised in papers before, they have been sold in the finest jewelry stores at \$75.00 or \$100.00—a price which only the rich could afford. Caution: Others have limited our advertisement, but they do not distinctly say Elgin or Waltham. This is a wonderful Swiss watch. This watch is equal to watches sold at \$100.00, our regular price is \$38.00, but for \$30.00 we make a grand offer to advertise our goods. Read it carefully. If you are ordering in good faith, cut out ad, cut and send to us and we will send this watch to you by express (all charges paid by us) without paying one cent you can examine it thoroughly and if you do not find it exactly as represented and every word we have said true, leave it, otherwise pay the express agent our one-half introductory price, \$19.00, and take the watch. If when you have carried the watch thirty days it does not prove a good timepiece and all we have said is true, return it and we will send the money back to another watch. A special guarantee is sent to this effect. No other firm will give you this privilege, they only allow you to see them, you do not know they will keep time. We expect every one who gets this watch at \$19.00 will know it to be a friend and help us. We have made many sales at our regular price, \$38.00. It is therefore important to that we sell this watch at \$19.00. We will not send two watches to any one person at \$19.00. After the first order you must pay \$38.00 for a watch equal to this was never advertised before. A \$100 solid Gold Watch for \$19.00 and we pay the express charges. Think of it! state which wanted, ladies' or gent's size. Address or call on (if possible). KIRTLAND BROS. & CO., 62 Fulton Street, New York.

The Womans Home Journal, Boston, Mass., a beautiful 16-page paper, sent an entire year to any address for 50 cts.; 6 mos. for 25 cts.

\$5 A DAY SURE. \$2.15 Samples FREE Horse owners buy 1 to 6. 20 other specialties. E. E. BREWSTER, Holly, Mich.

6 Months FOR 10 Cts.

Send 10 cents in silver, or 12 cts. in stamps and we will send the Home and Fireside for Six Months and to each subscriber Free 62 complete stories by popular Authors. One copy Home Cook Book and Family Physician, one copy Gulliver's Travels a standard Juvenile book Home and Fireside is a large illustrated Family paper, and is one of the best papers published. We want 60,000 new subscribers—this is why we make this great offer. 5 annual subscriptions and 6 sets of books sent for 60 cents.

Address Home & Fireside, 294 Broadway, N.Y.

SQUARES

VELVET and PLUSH to set off and perfect your crazy patchwork quilt. Birds, flowers, sprays, etc. Please bought Slipper factory bargain remnant sale. Assorted and painted by us in oil colors. All for 25 cts. ART STORE, Box 298 Augustus, Mo.

A WATCH Solid Silver, Stem-wind. Stem-set, given away with 1st TO EVERY AGENT who will Order to us. FREE. Arizona Medicine Co., Jersey City, N.J.

COLD WATCHES FREE

The first person telling us correctly the longest verse in the Bible, will receive an Elegant Solid Gold Hunting Case Watch (lady's or gent's) worth \$50.00; the second person giving the correct answer will receive an Elegant Solid Gold Chatelaine Watch, worth \$25. The third a Stem Wind Case Watch, and each of the next ten, if there be so many correct answers, a handsome Silver Nickel Watch; all stem-winders and setters and guaranteed. Our reason for making this bold offer is to get new homes. With your answer you must send 25c. (stamp, silver, or postal note), for one year's subscription to the Youth's Leader, a handsome 32 column illustrated monthly, brim full with interesting reading for the whole family. You will be well pleased with the paper, to say nothing of the opportunity of getting a watch free. This offer is limited to April 1st, and names of the winners will appear in our issue for that month. Address, Youth's Leader Co., New Haven, Conn.

\$1,200 to \$2,400 a Year A PRIZE TO EVERY PERSON

Who Sends us by Mail a Correct Answer to the Above Four-Word Rebus on or Before Tuesday, March 29th, 1892. \$400 CASH We will give \$125 cash for the first correct answer, \$75 cash for the 2nd, \$50 cash for the 3rd, \$10 cash to EACH of the next five. To the person who sends by mail the Last Correct Answer we will give \$50 cash. To the next to the last \$25 cash. To the next \$25 cash. To the next five \$5 cash to each one. Besides the cash prizes we will give to every person who sends a correct answer \$2 worth of our salable goods and send them all charges prepaid by us. With your answer send 50 cents postal note or silver, or 25 cents postage stamps to pay proportion of shipping and advertising expenses. Our object is to get you to try our goods and, if possible, make you a regular agent for them in your County or State by which you can easily make \$1,200 to \$2,400 a year. Address EAST INDIA CO., Jersey City, N.J.

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GOLD WATCHES FREE!

Ladies' or Gents' Size

We, the publishers of this paper, will give away ABSOLUTELY FREE! A genuine Gold Stem winding and Stem setting Watch in order to get new subscribers and agents to any persons as stated in our advertisement in our paper. These Watches come in Ladies' or Gents' size. Hunting case or Open Face in different styles and cases. Each and every Watch will be warranted and guaranteed by us and an American Watch Co. who have been doing business in this Country for the last 20 years to be first-class in every particular and to run and keep correct time for 5 years! also that each and every Watch mentioned above is genuine Gold, or we will forfeit \$1,000 or any School, Church or Charitable Institution in the United States. This is certain to be of great interest to all. To the living publisher. How can we do all this? This is a question that thousands who read our advertisement will ask; we answer—Easily! Enough! and in order to make everything perfectly plain to you we offer the following bona-fide explanation: Papers of a National reputation spend each year from \$25,000 to \$50,000 in advertising to make known their publication and increase their advertising patronage. Of course, no paper can possibly make money, or even exist without advertising. Consequently by giving away absolutely Free a Gold Watch we expect to get the largest circulation of any Family publication we can command easily from \$25,000 to \$50,000 per inch from advertising, to say nothing about the income from subscriptions. See! Then it will be only a question of time with proper management and square, honest and truthful statements to our subscribers that we will be friends with every person in the land. Then again, we know that our Gold Watches and our paper will give such perfect satisfaction that we will get as many as 50 to 100 new subscribers in every town where our paper goes, and as there are something like 60,000 towns in America you can easily see what an immense circulation we are sure to build up. Remember we are after a large circulation! We must have it! Even though it costs a MILLION DOLLARS! Otherwise our enterprise would be a dead failure. Dr. Wilson's Compound should be in every home. It will save hundreds of dollars in doctor's bills. Address DR. WILSON REMEDY CO., 334 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

We, the publishers of this paper, will give away ABSOLUTELY FREE! A genuine Gold Stem winding and Stem setting Watch in order to get new subscribers and agents to any persons as stated in our advertisement in our paper. These Watches come in Ladies' or Gents' size. Hunting case or Open Face in different styles and cases. Each and every Watch will be warranted and guaranteed by us and an American Watch Co. who have been doing business in this Country for the last 20 years to be first-class in every particular and to run and keep correct time for 5 years! also that each and every Watch mentioned above is genuine Gold, or we will forfeit \$1,000 or any School, Church or Charitable Institution in the United States. This is certain to be of great interest to all. To the living publisher. How can we do all this? This is a question that thousands who read our advertisement will ask; we answer—Easily! Enough! and in order to make everything perfectly plain to you we offer the following bona-fide explanation: Papers of a National reputation spend each year from \$25,000 to \$50,000 in advertising to make known their publication and increase their advertising patronage. Of course, no paper can possibly make money, or even exist without advertising. Consequently by giving away absolutely Free a Gold Watch we expect to get the largest circulation of any Family publication we can command easily from \$25,000 to \$50,000 per inch from advertising, to say nothing about the income from subscriptions. See! Then it will be only a question of time with proper management and square, honest and truthful statements to our subscribers that we will be friends with every person in the land. Then again, we know that our Gold Watches and our paper will give such perfect satisfaction that we will get as many as 50 to 100 new subscribers in every town where our paper goes, and as there are something like 60,000 towns in America you can easily see what an immense circulation we are sure to build up. Remember we are after a large circulation! We must have it! Even though it costs a MILLION DOLLARS! Otherwise our enterprise would be a dead failure. Dr. Wilson's Compound should be in every home. It will save hundreds of dollars in doctor's bills. Address DR. WILSON REMEDY CO., 334 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

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Upon receipt of a One Dollar Bill, Postal Note, Express Money Order, Registered Letter or P. O. Money Order for one year's Subscription to Farm and Household we will send you by return mail, postage paid, **Absolutely free**, as a Premium, this beautiful and elegant Stem winder as illustrated here. This advertisement may never appear again. So Cut It Out! Nothing is gained by correspondence as everything is fully explained here. References. All Newspaper Publishers, any Mercantile Agency, Bank, Merchant or Express Agent in this city. Extra! We will send six of these Premiums and Six copies of our paper for One Year to a club of six persons for \$5. Perhaps you can get five of your friends to join you and thus get your own Premium and paper **Free**. Address FARM & HOUSEHOLD, 7 Murray St. New York

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COMFORT.

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A STRANGE STORY.

When I was a young girl of nineteen, just verging into womanhood, a misfortune befel me which in one sad hour changed the whole course of my life and transformed me from a pampered child of fortune with servants to fulfill my every wish, to a penniless pauper, obliged to toil for my daily bread.

My father was a retired merchant, who after amassing a handsome fortune, had settled down to enjoy it quietly. We had a splendid home and lived happily until that terrible blow came. My poor parent, who could not bear himself away from that bane of mercantile life-speculation, was induced to invest his entire fortune in a silver mine, which like all such, promised fabulous returns.

But it proved absolutely worthless, as such things often do, and every dollar was gone as if thrown into the sea. We were ruined, for our happy home had to be sold to meet obligations arising out of the ill-fated venture, and we were practically without a roof to cover our heads. Nor was this all. My father, crazed by the disaster his foolhardiness had brought upon him and his loved ones, committed suicide, and my poor mother followed him shortly after, of a broken heart, leaving me to battle with the world as best I could. Ah! what a sad time that was for me! Picture to yourself the spectacle of a young girl left alone under these deplorable circumstances. To add to my sorrow, friends and acquaintances who were glad and proud of my friendship in the days of my prosperity shunned and forsook me in the hour of my trouble and gave me but little help. Ah! me, 'tis the way of the world; wealth and position, not self and worth are the things valued and respected in this world as I learned it in the severe school of experience. I, at length, was lucky enough to secure a position in a gentleman's family as governess, a post for which I was well-fitted, having received an excellent education, and being a fine musician.

The gentleman, Mr. Randall Chessmere, lived with his wife and three children in a beautiful country mansion four miles from the metropolis. He was very wealthy and a more luxurious home than Oak Hall—such was the name of his estate—I never set foot in. All that taste could suggest and money buy went to furnish the mansion, which resembled an eastern monarch's palace, with heavy Persian carpets, magnificent pictures, and rare articles of *civiltà* on every side. The house stood in its own grounds, and was embowered in huge oak trees from which the place took its name.

The family knew of my sad circumstances and had great sympathy for me, and treated me very kindly, more as if I was a guest rather than a servant. My duties were light and pleasant, being to teach the three children of my employers, two girls and a boy, bright, lovable little people, whom it was a pleasure rather than a task to instruct. They gave me no trouble whatever and we spent many a happy day together in the nursery. Thus the time passed until our little family circle was increased by a new arrival. This was Royal Chessmere, my employer's brother, who after a prolonged tour abroad, had now returned to make his home under his brother's hospitable roof until he should marry and set up an establishment of his own. A very welcome addition he proved, for he was a merry-tempered, hand-some young fellow of about thirty, who banished every feeling of gloom by his delightful stories and descriptions of things and places he had seen in his travels.

Many a delightful evening did we spend in the winter time clustered about the large open fireplace in the parlor of Oak Hall, where the ruddy firelight threw a red glow on our faces which were turned eagerly towards Royal, who was amusing us with his bright stories and anecdotes. I must confess I was greatly interested in Royal Chessmere and studied him a great deal, and though he always gave the appearance of a merry, light-hearted man, who had not a care in the world to trouble him, yet, at times, I noticed him pensive enough, and with a grave, not to say troubled, expression on his face.

This surprised and puzzled me not a little and I asked myself the question: Did Royal Chessmere have a trouble or a secret which nobody else knew? Alas! I was destined to discover that he indeed had, and one of the greatest and most mysterious troubles man ever knew. I liked and admired him very much and he was very kind to me. Naturally, we were thrown much in each other's way, and though he was always kind and courteous to me, I never dreamed that he would ever feel 'or me a warmer feeling than admiration and respect.'

Therefore, imagine my astonishment when several months later Royal Chessmere made me a proposal of marriage! I was alone in the nursery at the time looking over the children's copy-books, and it was a favorable opportunity for Royal, who had probably been awaiting such a chance, to declare his passion. Of course, I accepted him, as I loved him as much as he loved me, and we were married a year after.

We had a merry wedding, for my employer now relative, would not hear of a quiet marriage such as Royal and I desired, and they gave a grand supper and reception to their neighboring friends and acquaintances in our honor. It was a memorable and happy event for me, but I was tired enough when the last speech had been spoken and toast drank, and our guests had departed. So, after bidding Mr. and Mrs. Chessmere good night, my husband and I sought our bed-chamber at once.

I was so tired I could hardly keep my eyes open and disrobing at once got into bed, falling into a sound slumber almost immediately. The last thing I remember ere I was bound fast in slumber's chain was gazing through my half-closed eye-lids and seeing my husband seated near the fire, leisurely divesting himself of his garments and looking at me with a strange, sorrowful look.

How long I slept I could not tell but I awoke with a peculiar feeling of dread oppressing me—dread of I know not what. The room was plunged in gloom except for a partial illumination made by the fire in the grate, which was now fast dying out in a mass of dark red embers and faintly lighting the room with a ruddy glow. My husband was laying beside me, but his slumber seemed unnaturally profound. He was so still that I could not even hear him breathe.

But thinking him like myself tired after the events of the day and sleeping unusually sound after them I paid no more attention to him and fell asleep again. When I awoke again it seemed as if my slumber had been very brief. The fire was entirely out and the room as dark as the tomb. But I could see my husband sleeping beside me as still as before, and he seemed to be pale and rigid, looking with the white bed clothes around him, I thought with a feeling of terror, exactly like a corpse laid out in the ceremonies of the grave. I was nervous and to awake Royal and end this painful experience I called him by name.

"Royal, are you well? Awake."

He did not stir in the least. I called him again and again and shook him to awaken him, but he neither moved nor spoke, and I was amazed to find that when I touched him he was as cold as marble.

Now thoroughly surprised and alarmed I

sprang on the floor, and groping to the mantel-shelf, struck a match and lit the gas, allowing a flood of light to illuminate every nook and corner of the apartment, glancing as I did so at the clock. It was ten minutes to one.

Then I rushed to the bed I had just quitted, and throwing aside the bed clothes, looked at my husband. Never to my dying day will I forget the terrible sight I saw. My husband was laying in the bed, rigid as a corpse and the hue of death on his face, his eyes wide open and gazing in horror up into mine.

"He is dead!" I wailed in anguish and swooned dead away.

When I recovered my senses, to my bewilderment I found myself in my husband's arms and felt his kisses upon my lips.

"Oh! Royal," I exclaimed, "God be praised. You are alive after all and I was only dreaming."

"Alas!" he said, with a sob, "you were not dreaming, my darling: to God that you had been."

And then Royal Chessmere told me the strangest story man's lips ever uttered. It appeared that he was the victim of a strange disease resembling catalepsy which seized him at periodic intervals about once a month and when he least expected to be attacked. This ailment was not at all painful only strange and unnatural and seized him as sudden as a lightning-stroke, and while it lasted, which was only for a quarter of an hour, transformed him to all intents and purposes into a corpse. His strength would leave him and he would grow as rigid as iron, not able to move hand or foot to rouse himself out of the dreadful cataleptic state in which he had found himself. He had his senses throughout all, however, and would be conscious of everything around him; his eyes being open, sight being the only sense left to him. This disease, he said, had been in his family for over a hundred years, and was the curse of the Chessmores, and one person in each generation was certain to be attacked by it. Legend ascribed this strange ailment to the curse which a gypsy had pronounced upon a member of the Chessmores in the last century, for some injury, real or fancied, which had been done the beldame. No remedy had ever been discovered for this peculiar affliction, which completely baffled medical science. The most eminent physicians had interested themselves in the strange malady and tried to cure it, but all their efforts were abortive and they had to confess themselves defeated. One had given it as his opinion that marriage might correct the trouble, but my husband assured me that he had not married me owing to this idea. For some months prior to his marriage he had not suffered an attack, and he thought from this that the strange disease had gone forever, as an eminent London physician had told him an accident of birth to, vampire-like, suck all the happiness from her brother's life. The child was not ill enough to die. It would live and gain hold in the world, and this must be prevented before too late.

One morning Mrs. Clark entered the nursery. "Get the child ready as soon as you can," she said to the nurse. "I am going to take it into the country to board, where it will do better." She was already partly dressed for traveling and in an hour took the baby away. In two days she returned home, and wrote to her brother that the air of the Palms not agreeing with his child, she had sent it to the seaside to nurse.

Mrs. Clark supped luxuriously that night, and while she slept, Patrolman King, following a faint wailing, descended an area in a dark and narrow street of Albany, stumbled over a basket.

"A kid, by gingo!"

The captain of the police station was very busy with his telegraph despatches when King entered, but he looked up at the faint, quivering cry which proceeded from the patrolman's basket. "Another," he said.

"This one is blind," answered the man in a low voice.

He uncovered the basket, and the portly captain rose and looked over the railing of his table at the pitiful atom turning its sightless orbs from side to side, and seeking nourishment with gaping mouth and weak cries. Nothing living could have been more helpless and miserable.

"It's nigh about dead with cold," said King.

"Umph! give it to the matron. Take it to the hospital in the morning if it is alive."

Captain Hurd was not a talking man, but an expression of sadness passed briefly over his iron face.

There was a sick woman and a stray child in the matron's room. The latter was a large, fair woman with a quiet face.

"What have you there, a foundling?"

King nodded.

She took the basket and raised the child.

"A blind baby, and only a few weeks old! Left in a basement this chilly night? Well, there are some nice people in this world."

"Isn't it enough for anyone to want, you see?" said King, lingering to see the wail laid on the matron's lap before the fire, and tiny hands covered with her own warm palms. "I'll just step into the kitchen and see that Jim gets some hot milk directly. Shall I?"

"Yes."

The sick woman who lay on the settee lifted her head from the pillow.

"No mother ever did that," she said.

"I don't know," said the matron. "There are strange women as well as men."

In the morning the babe was living and was taken to the hospital.

Fate has strange chances.

When Charles Ward returned from Europe he didn't, as Mrs. Clark expected, look about him for a second wife. The one woman he had loved was dead.

The letter from his sister, bearing tidings that his child was dead, was an old one when he again entered his home. It was not strange, he knew, that a motherless infant should die; but the sad news had given him a pang. And then he believed that he had worn suffering out.

For the next fifteen years he devoted himself to business and amassed a large fortune.

About eight years after his return, he was urged to become one of the directors of an orphan asylum.

Among the destitute children brought in was a little girl, very frail and sensitive. But he thought her very beautiful, and to Mrs. Clark's intense displeasure adopted her.

"Who is she?" she asked coldly.

"She has been a friendless waif with an unknown history. She is now my daughter. She is one of the few children I can love. I see no reason why I should deny myself the pleasure of cherishing her," Ward replied rather sternly, for his relations with his sister were not of late always harmonious.

"I know the secret of your taking such a step. The child looks like May," she replied with a severe glance.

He forgot, in his pleasure, to resent her words.

"Do you see it?"

"I thought so. May shall be her name," and he took the little girl between his knees and kissed her.

Henceforth his defrauded heart overflowed upon the child. She grew up modest, sweet violet of a girl, utterly unspoiled by indulgence and luxury. But Mrs. Clark never liked her for growing more and more to look like the mother of the cruelly abandoned baby.

Mrs. Clark had strictly justified herself in taking this extreme step; but her hair was gray and she had aged in appearance greatly. For she was a young woman when her brother's wife died.

Her stepson had married; her husband had lost his money and died, and she was installed the mistress of her brother's home when May was adopted. The latter could not like her, but she delighted her father.

She loved young Dr. Glen, too. And why not, since he was her lover, and as fine and ardent a young fellow as could well be. Ward approved the union and the young girl's life was very bright and beautiful.

Then came a catastrophe and all the horrors of sudden death. Charles Ward was thrown from his carriage and killed.

No will could be found.

Mrs. Clark put in a claim for the whole of her brother's property, and, by the aid of un-

scrupulous lawyers, seemed likely to get it.

"An adopted child does not inherit unless by a special provision," she said boldly to May.

The young girl was bitterly grieved.

"Papa didn't intend it so. He loved me. He would not leave me penniless," she declared.

"I can give you a good home, my darling, not quite so luxurious as this, but with all comforts," said young Dr. Glen.

"It is not that. Papa is wronged. He meant

this house, which sheltered my childish head to be my home as long as I lived. He has often told me so."

Mrs. Clark's conduct was insufferable. At

every turn she insulted May, called her an intruder, a beggar, an outcast, whom her brother had benevolently harbored.

The poor girl was wild with pain; but she

took the worst of her suffering from her lover.

One day he entered the house and begged to

take May out.

"I don't care to drive."

"But I have a purpose."

She yielded, and they went to the consumptives' home.

An emaciated woman, stretched on one of the little cots, tools and held May's hand.

"Miss Ward, I know about your trouble, and I am going to help you. Mrs. Clark was my enemy. My husband deserted me; he was a graceless fellow, but I loved him.

"I took service with Mrs. Clark, but she turned me and my baby out of her house. I had no friends, and I wandered about the streets until I fainted for want of food, and was taken to the police station where the matron helped and consoled me. But my little babe died.

"While I was at the station, an abandoned babe-blind-was brought in. The matron examined its clothing for some mark of identity. She found none.

"But I was more fortunate, a handkerchief had been accidentally dropped in the basket which I recognized. I had laundered it at Mrs. Clark's house, it bore her initials. I kept it.

"I kept track of you. I knew your blindness was removed at the hospital. You went to one orphan asylum after another, until, to my joy Mr. Charles Ward adopted you. Why, child, he is your own father.

"I have traced out all the story. Here are papers which will prove it at every point, and that cold and wicked woman will not triumph. I have made it my study for years to defeat her, and I have done it. And now I do not dread to die, for I shall see my child her cruelty killed."

The woman's name was Clara Jaynes.

Dr. Glen's father, a noted physician, had known her for years, and her proofs of the story she told had been prepared with a care

that showed her to be an uncommonly shrewd woman. Her wrongs had made her revengeful to a good purpose, for, to May's joy, her statements were found undeniable even by Mrs. Clark's most skillful attorneys.

The latter went into obscurity, where her meditations probably accompanied her, and prevented from enjoying the happiness of the good and just.

May succeeded to her father's beautiful house, where she was very happy, feeling that such had been his wish.

When it came out that Dr. Glen's father had operated upon her eyes in infancy, and been the instrument of restoring her sight and beauty, it was an added source of joy to both her and her young husband.

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DEAR MYSTIC FRIENDS:
Come, let us have a jolly good time this month, around the fireplace in "The Mystic Castle," where the flames of Puzzledom burst forth with a cheerful and glowing splendor. Have you never been with us before? Has COMFORT, with its many blessings, just entered your home?

If so, you certainly want to enjoy the pleasures we enjoy each month, tangling and untangling the "Intricate Knots from Puzzledom," working for the fine useful prizes offered, and having a social chat as we gather at the "Realm of Comfort."

Welcome to all, especially to those who have lately joined us, and to those who come seeking admittance to "The Mystic Castle" this time.

Send original puzzles for publication, solutions to the "Mysteries" below, and all your letters concerning "The Mystic Castle" to Oldcastle, Comfort, Utica, N. Y.

Be sure to sign your full name and address, as well as *nom de plume* to every letter you write, also attach it to each puzzle you send.

Oldcastle will answer all letters received from his Mystic Friends, if a two-cent stamp is inclosed.

Solvers! Have you seen the announcement of the "Gold Medal Tournament" in our last issue? A fine gold medal, suitably engraved and inscribed, is to be given to the solver making the best record from Jan. to July 1892. For further particulars relating to this contest, see January "Mystic Castle."

Oldcastle has received Ophir's and Delian's photographs for his album. Many thanks to you, Mystic Friends, for them. Hope many more will follow suit.

Danville Solver will hereafter be known as Percy Vere; Cal I, Fornia as Ned Land; W. H. S. as R. E. Ward; Line as Essay; Buck I, Ned as R. E. Turn; Phil G. Pena as Bennie Factor.

Now for a little miscellaneous chat. Novice sent a list of solutions to October "Mysteries" too late to be credited in our last issue.—Solvers will please date their lists of solutions.—The names of the winners in the "Prize Word-Hunt Contest" will be announced next month.—Please do not write with lead pencil.

Contributions have been received from Novice, 16; Remond Factor, 44; Wild Bill, Jr., 5; James Brooks, 4; Odell Cyclone, Kernel, R. E. Ward, Remondo and Merlin, 3; Ajax, R. Ebos, Southern Girl, (New Orleans, La.) Ned Land and Aspido, 2; Bula Dillingham, 1.

Solvers to November "Mysteries" are as follows:

Complete Lists—Doc, Eglington, S. N. Dills, Frank, Ophir, Kal Q. Lator and Hercules.

Incomplete Lists—Fancy, R. H. Reddish, Ypsie, Esmy, Mrs. G. P. C. and W. E. Wiatt, II; Castranova, Roland, Ben Net and Audax, 10; Delian and Wild Bill, Jr., 9; Remondo, 8; Guardineer, Southern Girl, (New Orleans, La.) and Phil, 7; Solon, Rosebug, Pat Riot and Novice, 6; Mrs. C. C. Haskell, Chinkapin Ridge, Odell Cyclone, Florine, Philos, Hi A. Watha and Buck I, Silver, 5; Pro Fesh, Misses Josie and Daisy Bourjil, Percy Vere, Noah Count and Arty Fishel, 4; Con T. Empate, Ned Land, Ajax, Mrs. Faany White, Remlap, Bill Arp, O. B. Server and Sis, 3; Maj. Mrs. W. E. Jaegle, Bula Dillingham and Dick Graver, 2; Jersey Lilly, 1.

Prize-winners—1. Doc. 2. Eglington. 3. S. N. Dills.

Solvers should endeavor to enter their lists as early as possible, as the time of receipt, as well as the correctness, is taken into consideration in awarding the prize.

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OLDCASTLE.

SOLUTIONS TO NOVEMBER'S MYSTERIES.

No. 237. Light-house.

No. 238. Ribbed.

No. 239. Notes.

No. 240.

P	P	A	T	E	R
I	R	A	T	E	R
S	T	O	N	E	R
E	N	D	W	O	O
D	O	W	E	U	Y

B	A	R	U	R	G
P	A	R	E	D	S
B	A	T	T	E	A
C	U	T	A	L	D
R	T	A	I	L	R
E	L	I	E	E	E
D	E	V	E	E	E
S	E	E	E	E	E
D	E	E	E	E	E

No. 241. C	No. 242. G
B U R	C O D
P A R E D	S A L A D
B A T T L E S	C A L D R O N
C U R T A I L E D	G O L D E N R O D
R E L I E V E	D A R N I N G
D E L I V E	D O R N S
S E E	N O G
D	E

No. 243. Q	No. 244. Z
C U E	H Y P
F R O N D	T O G A S
C R A D L E D	H O N O R E D
Q U O D D I B E T	Z Y G O M A T I C
E N L I V E N	P A R A G O N
D E B E L	S E T O N
D E N	D I N
T	C

No. 245. M	No. 246. L
B A C	P O H
C E R A M	T A C E S
C A L A M U S	T H R U S T S
B E L E S P R I T	P A R I S I A N S
M A R A S C H I N O S	H E S I T A T E E S
C A M P H E N E S	S T A R T E R
S I N E S	S N E E R
T O S	S E S
S	S

No. 247.	No. 248.
S T R O N G	R - E B U - F
O I L E R S	O - R M O - U
D I G I T S	B - O R E A - L
O U T A C T	E - X H O R - T
S T R A I T	R - E E C H - O
Y E R N E D	T - A R T A - N

MYSTERIES.

No. 281. Numerical.

The whole, composed of twenty-three letters, is the name of a noted writer.

The 8, 21, 10, 16, 3, 11, 23 is a law term, meaning support.

The 4, 17, 6, 13, 22, 10, 15 is a mixture of different kinds of grain.

The 12, 14, 19, 1 is a disease that is paroxysmal.

The 9, 20, 18, 18, 5 is a berry.

The 7 and 2 are found in "The Mystic Band."

Kansas City, Mo.

BENNIE FACTOR.

No. 284. Crossword.

In Bagdad for my first I look;
From Omaha the next I took;

The third in Russia can be found,
And fourth's in Kansas, I'll be bound.

The fifth's in Egypt, and I find
The sixth in Portugal, now mind

That a basket WHOLE will surely be,
Make sure that WHOLE you plainly see.

Gouldsboro Sta., Pa.

ARTHUR.

No. 285. Double Letter Enigma.

In "golden treasure;"

In "love without measure;"

In "lovely and fair;"

In "golden hair."

Perhaps you'll guess it,

When you see,

My whole, is good

For you and me.

Marshfield, Pa.

R. EBUS.

No. 286. Apheresis.

When the signal of war resounds o'er the land,
The TOTAL soon spreads from hilltop to sea;

And patriots together in serried ranks stand,
To battle for home and dear liberty.

Great Britain once tried to grind us to dust,
And mustered her minions on land and on sea,

But we put in our God and our muskets our trust,

And down in mid ocean went her ship-load of tea,

And up sprang the nation from tyranny free.

Now wide o'er the land our millions are spread,

They till the rich soil that yields them their bread;

Dame Nature is kind, and her plants of bright green,

Of use to mankind, are everywhere seen;

With fair, scented flowers the senses they please;

And houses for shelter man makes of the trees;

The waste places even with verdure are fair,

And FINAL, says Webster, is a plant that grows there.

Dubois, Ill.

ASPIRO.

No. 287. Beheadement.

While, I mean to irritate; behead me and have done;

behead me again and I mean devoured; trans-

pose me and have to rust; behead, and I am a pre-

position; again, and I am a letter from "Old Castle,"

Mendocino City, Cal.

NED LAND.

No. 289. Square.

1. A prose writer. 2. Distance. 3. A kind of pancake. 4. A hot, oppressive wind common in the Mediterranean Sea. 5. One who makes equal. 6. To come back.

Emden, Me.

GUY.

No. 292. Pentagon.

1. A letter. 2. A particle. 3. Not easily discovered.

4. Marked with dots, circles, etc. 5. Having belts surrounded by rings. 6. English novelist (1840?). 7.

A fine spirituous liquor 8. To bring to the considera-

tion of. 9. The substance which incloses the ore on

every side.

Benton, Texas.

G. WHIZZ.

No. 293. Diamond.

1. A letter. 2. A small vessel. 3. Subterranean

cavities or passages. 4. Revolved around. 5. A

weeding out (obs.). 6. Throwing. 7. A net. 8. An

animal. 9. A letter.

Bennett, N.Y.

ROLAND.

PRIZES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS.

1. Two fine twenty-five cent books are offered by

Remardo for the best double six letter square, i.e.

reading downward differently than across.

2. As Doc already has a copy of "Payne's Business

Pointers," he offers the copy won by him in a recent

contest for the best batch of "flats," received before

April 1, 1892. Mark puzzles "In Competition," and

address Oldcastle, Comfort, Utica, N. Y.

If you wish to be notified by mail of the receipt of your letters, inclose a two-cent stamp.

PRIZES FOR SOLUTIONS.

1. For the first complete or largest lists of solutions to this month's "Mysteries," Webster's Handy Dictionary.

2. For the second best list, a year's subscription to COMFORT.

3. For the first complete list of solutions to the "flats" in this issue, three Silk Handkerchiefs.

4. For the first complete list of solutions to the "forms," Carl's Treasure Cabinet.

Competition closes April 1, 1892. Solutions, solvers and prize-winners will appear in May "Mystic Castle."

Prize-winners—1. Doc. 2. Eglington. 3. S. N. Dills.

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Learned by note in 1 hour. Large Chart (14x22) for Piano or Organ, 5 lessons, 10c.

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LEAP YEAR THOUGHTS.



A cynical old bachelor said to me the other day: "There are several things which you can never get a lady, be she young or old, to confess to. Here are some of them: That she laces tight; that her shoes are too small for her; that she is ever tired at a ball; that she paints; that she is as old as she looks; that she has been more than five minutes dressing; that she kept you waiting; that she blushed when a certain person's name was mentioned; that she ever says a thing that she does not mean; that she is fond of scandal; that she cannot keep a secret; that she—she of all persons in the world—is in love; that she does not want a new bonnet; that she can do with a single thing less when she is about to travel; that she has not the disposition of a saint—or how could she go through one-half of what she does? That she does not know better than every one else what is good for her; that she is a flirt or a coquette; that she is ever in the wrong."

Evidently St. Valentine's day to him has been one of successive disasters.

Another woman who is able to do pretty well without the aid of a husband has this to say: "Young girls, wait until you are at least twenty-five before you think of marrying! All tastes change between the ages of sixteen and thirty. The books you read, the games you enjoy, the milliner's skill you trust to, the friendships you cultivate, all are changing; why should not the tastes and fancies of the soul?" The age that feeds upon Mrs. Southworth and Mrs. Holmes is vastly unlike the age that demands stronger mental food. The hero you are ready to worship at eighteen will not be a hero to you, ten chances to one, at twenty-eight. Wait until your tastes settle and the possibilities within you have found their level before you fix upon an unalterable destiny. For, whether it bring sorrow or joy, the choice you make is an irrevocable one. There ought to be a special legislation against hasty and early marriages, for, although there are signal exceptions to the rule, three-fifths of the exceedingly early unions turn out a curse to either or both of the mated ones."

There is however only too much truth in what she says.



Here is a specimen of how the French view the marriage relation. When asked, many years ago, why he did not like to marry, the French working-man answered: "I would marry if I could get a divorce when I thought it necessary." Now that divorce has been introduced, however, the number of marriages has failed to increase.

and the number of separations grows from year to year. In 1890, the number of marriages in France was 3,602 less than in 1889. In 1881 there were 1,657 divorces to 10,000 marriages; in 1890 there were 5,457 divorces to 10,000 marriages. The day is near at hand when there will be as many divorces as marriages in France.

Yet the Frenchman in his domestic relation is generally as comfortable and happy and as docile as his English or American cousin.

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H. F. BURT, Taunton, Mass.

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LOVELY NEW VARIEGATED TUBEROSE
the leaves of this grand variety are bordered with creamy white; flowers very large and of exquisite fragrance. Bulbs continually grow and bloom year after year. It makes a most magnificent plant. It blooms several weeks earlier than the other sorts, which greatly adds to its value. For only 25c. we will send by mail, postpaid, all of the following: 1 bulb of the Lovely New Variegated Tuberose; 1 bulb of the Excelsior Pearl Tuberose; 1 bulb New Seeding Gladioli; 2 bulbs Oxalis free bloomers; 1 pkt. Fuller's Perfection Peony; 1 pkt. Peacock's Tail; 1 pkt. satin white; 1 pkt. Fuller's Perfection Balsam; 1 pkt. Floral Park Gladiolus; 1 pkt. Lovely Margaret Carnation. These rare bulbs and seeds will all flower this season and we send them for only 25c. Order of once. Catalogue sent free.

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We will give to the first person who tells us by mail the first correct answer, **\$100.00 in gold;** to the second, **\$50.00;** to the next five persons, a handsome **Silk Dress Pattern** of 16 yards, in Black, Blue, Green, Brown, or Gray. To the next 10, a **Solid Gold Genuine Diamond Ring.** We prepay all shipping charges on presents, and send in accordance with this offer on the same day the answer is received. All answers must be sent by mail. Contest closes with the last regular mail delivered to us **March 31st, 1892.** Your answer must be accompanied by 25c in silver or 30c in stamps for a vial of **DR. HOBBS LIT. LE VEGETABLE PILLS.** Pills sent to any address by mail. Immediately after March 31st a printed list giving the names and addresses of the successful contestants will be mailed to each person who has sent in an answer. When you order mention this paper. Address **HOBBS MEDICINE CO., 358 Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.**

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INTERPRETED.



HE HELD UP A PENNY TO PAY.

"Well, little boy," said the candy man, "And what will you have to-day?" "Yuppy yate ticky," said Johnnie Moran. And he held up a penny to pay.

"Say it once more," said the candy man. "Your meaning is rather obscure."

"But 'Yuppy yate ticky' said Johnnie again, With a smile that was sweet and demure.

"Is it this? Is it that?" said the candy man. "Or perhaps it's a peppermint stick? Or a chocolate cream? Come! tell if you can. And try, little boy, to be quick."

But Johnnie looked up at the candy man And solemnly shook his head,

Then all of a sudden he thought of a plan And took to his heels and fled.



SHE STRAIGHT ADVANCED WITH HER SHOULDER SQUARE.

But he soon returned, with a confident air, And his sister Elizabeth Ann, Who straight advanced with her shoulders square, Till she stood by the candy man.

He was wondering still, as he scratched his nose, What "Yuppy yate ticky" might be, When "Give my brother a cent's worth, please. Of sumpin taint sticky," said she.

E. L. SYLVESTER

The Yankee Blade, Boston, Mass., will be sent to all new subscribers every week for one year for \$1.00; 6 mos. for 50 cents.



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Complete Outfit for learning Telegraphy and operating short telegraph lines. Consists, full size, well made Sounder and Key Set, with Battery, Instruction Book, Wire, and all materials for operating. Sent by express upon receipt of \$3.75 by registered letter, money order, express order or stamps. Illustrated pamphlet of practical instructions, with description of instruments, how to put up Telegraph Lines, Electric Bells, Batteries, &c., free to any address. J. H. BUNNELL & CO., 76 Cortlandt St., N. Y. Largest and best Telegraph and Electric Bells Supply House in America.

\$500 FOR A TOMATO

Last spring I offered \$500 to any person producing a 1 lb. Mammoth Prize Tomato; T. R. Harris, Abbott, N. B., won it with one weighing 3 lbs. 84 ozs., and I sent him my check for \$500. It measured over 6 in. in diameter. 37 tomatoes grew on one stem over 3 feet from the ground. Largest plant on record 13 ft. 6 in. tall.

This mammoth strain creates a sensation wherever it goes, and is the largest ever offered. Thousands of my customers have grown them to weigh over 45 ozs. The quality is excellent; after you once test it you will grow no others. If well cared for they will produce 1 bushel, plant (see cut) of large, smooth, bright red tomatoes, very solid with only a few seeds, and almost entirely free from rot. If started early, fruit ripens from July 4th to Sept. 1st. This year I offer \$500 Cash to any person producing a 3 lb. 10 oz. tomato. (It can be done.) Full directions how Mr. Harris grew his with each order. Plant some, you may win the prize. All my seed is saved from large specimens.

SURE HEAD CABBAGE

Is all head and sure to head, very uniform in size, firm and fine in texture, excellent in quality and a good keeper. Single heads have weighed over 64 pounds.

EARLY SNOWBALL TURNIP

In the earliest in the world, easy grown, good size, excellent quality. Will be far ahead of your neighbors.

My Catalogue, is worth 60cts. to any one who gets it. \$600 offered largest order; \$600 for a pansy blossom; \$300 for a bean plant with 100 pods, and above tomato prize.

I will send a packet each of Prize Tomato, Cabbage and Turnip, with my Catalogue of Bargains for only 25c. postage paid.

Every person sending silver for above collection, will receive F. B. MILL'S IMPROVED EXTRA EARLY THREE TOMATO, and a 50c. certificate for seeds, your choice from my bargain store. F. B. MILLS, Rose Hill, Onondaga Co. N.Y.